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L I F E
OF
L O R D J E F F R E Y.

WITH A

Selection from his Correspondence.

BY

Henry Thorne
L O R D COCKBURN,

ONE OF THE JUDGES OF THE COURT OF SESSION IN SCOTLAND.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

MY only apology for the presumption of engaging in this work, is, that it was undertaken at the request of the family, and of several of the friends, of Lord Jeffrey. Besides other objections, there is an age, after which it is seldom safe for one who has never tried to write a book, to begin the attempt.

There are both advantages and disadvantages in the nearness of a man's biography to his actual life. One of the disadvantages consists in the difficulty of speaking plainly of persons still living, or recently dead. "*His greatest fault* (says Lord Jeffrey of Hardy's Life of Charlemont) is, *that he does not abuse anybody*, even where the dignity of history and of virtue calls loudly

for such an infliction ;" and, no doubt, this is a serious objection. But if the biographer of Charlemont, though dealing with Irish transactions, felt the indelicacy of the censorian duty in a work published eleven years after the death of his subject, how would he have recoiled from it, if engaged, with any other affairs, within less than two? But, indeed, there were few persons whom Jeffrey himself abused ; and though there were some public matters connected with his life on which it would not be wrong to speak, even now, in terms of severe condemnation, it would be unworthy of his magnanimous spirit, if, in the very act of describing him, his friends were to remember provocations which he had forgotten.

My thanks are due, and are hereby given, to all those who have assisted me by contributions of letters.

These letters will probably be deemed the only valuable part of this work. It must, therefore, be explained, that he was so constant a correspondent, that those now published are but a small portion of what he was always writing ;

and that his letters were generally so long, and so full of those personal and domestic details, which, however delightful to receive, would be of no interest, and not even intelligible, to strangers, that they very seldom admit of being communicated entire. Nothing is omitted from this publication for any other reason. What have been selected are not given on account of any particular opinions or occurrences which they may record, but solely from their tendency to disclose the personal nature of the man. And I am bound to state, that, out of many hundreds of his letters that I have seen, there are scarcely three lines that might not be read with propriety to any sensitive lady, or to any fastidious clergyman.

LIFE OF LORD JEFFREY.

FRANCIS JEFFREY, the greatest of British critics, was born in Edinburgh on the 23d of October, 1773. There are very few persons the precise spot of whose nativity it is worth while taking much pains to fix. But as almost all the accounts of Jeffrey do specify a place, and a wrong one, it may be as well to mention that he certainly was *not* born in either of the three houses, in Fisher's Land, or Patterson's Court, or Buchanan's Court, all in Lawn-market Street, where the family afterward lived; but in one of the flats or floors of what is now marked No. 7, on the west side of Charles Street, George Square. Besides other unquestionable evidence, he himself pointed this out as his birth-place to his friend, Mr. Adam Black, bookseller.

His father was George Jeffrey, who was bred to the law, and became one of the depute-clerks in the Supreme Court, (called the Court of Session;) not a high, but a very respectable, situation. His mother was Henrietta Louden, a daughter of Mr. John Louden, who had been educated for the church, but abandoned it for farming, which he practised near Lanark. Their children were Margaret, who died in childhood; Mary, afterward married to George Napier, Esq., a writer to the signet, Edinburgh; Francis; John, a merchant; and Marion, afterward the wife of Dr. Thomas Brown, physician in Glasgow, now of Langfine, in

the county of Ayr. Francis survived the whole family.* The father, who died in 1812, aged seventy, was a sensible and very respectable man; but of rather a gloomy disposition. Mrs. Jeffrey had all the maternal virtues, and was greatly beloved by her family; the more so from the contrast between her and her husband. She died suddenly in September, 1786. Francis, then thirteen, happened to be passing a few days at Stevenson, in East Lothian, about seventeen miles from Edinburgh. Intelligence of his mother's danger reached the family he was living with; but as it was too late to get the boy into Edinburgh that night, they meant to conceal it from him till next day. But he had detected, or suspected it, and set off next morning before the house was astir, and walked home alone. The loss of their mother drew the children closer to each other, and the warmest affection subsisted between them throughout their whole lives.

Francis learned his mere letters at home; and John Cockburn, who had a school in the abyss of Bailie Fyfe's Close, taught him to put them together. He was the tiniest possible child, but dark and vigorous, and gained some reputation there while still in petticoats. One Sealy had the honour of giving him his whole dancing education, which was over before his ninth year began. It is to be hoped, for Mr. Sealy's sake, that this pupil was not the

* A story that is told of a fire having broken out, when he was about a year old, in his father's house, and of his being nearly sacrificed by having been forgotten in his garret crib, till rescued by a poor slater, whom he lived to save in return long afterward by gratuitous professional services, is, unfortunately, groundless. It has probably arisen from some confusion with a fire which consumed his father's house in 1792, when he was at Oxford, and when it was with difficulty that his grandmother was rescued by her grand-daughter, Mary Crockett, afterward Mrs. Murray.

best specimen of his skill; for certainly neither dancing, nor any muscular accomplishment, except walking, at which he was always excellent, were within his triumphs.

The more serious part of his education commenced in October, 1781; when, at the age of eight, he was sent to the High School of Edinburgh, where he continued for the next six years. This day-school had long been the most celebrated establishment of the kind in this country. Its mere antiquity gave it importance, and its position, as the metropolitan school, enabled it to look down upon the few rival institutions that then existed. Its triumph was completed by its not having been then discovered that interchanging Scotch and English boys did good to both, and by the total absence of the idea, which has since taken possession of so many weak heads, that whenever a boy is supposed to be not signalizing himself in Scotland, sending him to England, instead of stupifying him, must set him up. So that in addition to its age, its fame, and its merits, it had the still greater advantage of a monopoly, and this in the place where the aristocracy of Scotland chiefly resided. It had then what would now be deemed intolerable defects; but defects of the age, and not of the place, and which do not now exist. And it was cursed by two undermasters, whose atrocities young men cannot be made to believe, but old men cannot forget, and the criminal law would not now endure. It was presided over, however, by Dr. Alexander Adam, the author of the Roman Antiquities, whose personal and professional virtues were sufficient to sustain, and to redeem, any school; and in his two other undermasters, Mr. Luke Fraser, and Mr. French, he had associates worthy of their chief.*

* The school still survives and flourishes. Dr. Adam was succeeded in 1810 by Professor Pillans, who introduced the modern spirit of teach-

His first master was Mr. Fraser; who, from three successive classes, of four years each, had the singular good fortune to turn out Walter Scott, Francis Jeffrey, and Henry Brougham. He is justly described by Scott as “a good Latin scholar, and a very worthy man.” There were about one hundred and twenty boys in Jeffrey’s class, all under one master, unaided by any usher. When Jeffrey was in his seventeenth year, he wrote “A Sketch,” &c., full of personal recollections and views. In this paper he gives the following account of his first day’s sensations at this school:

“ My next step was to the Grammar school; and here my apprehensions and terrors were revived and magnified; for my companions, either through a desire of terrifying me, or because they had found it so, exaggerated to me the difficulty of our tasks, and dwelt upon the unrelenting severity of the master. Prepossessed with these representations, I trembled at what I was destined to suffer, and entered the school as if it had been a place of torture. Never, I think, was surprise equal to mine, the first day of my attendance. I sat in silent terror—all was buzz and tumult around—a foot is heard on the stairs—every thing is hushed as death, and every dimly smile prolonged into an expression of the most serious respect. The handle of the door sounds—ah! here he comes!—I thought my heart would have burst my breast. There began my disappointment. I had expected to have seen a little withered figure, with a huge rod in his hand, his eyes sparkling with rage, and his whole attitude resembling the pictures and

ing, and as many of the modern improvements as was wise for the place, and was probably the best head master of a Scotch classical school that had then appeared. He, when advanced in 1820 to a chair in the college, was succeeded by the late excellent Dr. Carson; who, on his retirement, made way for the present rector, Dr. Schmitz; whose learning is an honour to the institution, and whose ability as a teacher, and worth as a man, give the school all that strong claim to public support that the eminence of a head master ought to confer.

descriptions of the furies. Absurd as the idea was, I don't know how it had laid hold of my imagination, and I was surprised to see it reversed; and reversed it certainly was. For Mr. Fraser was a plump, jolly, heavy-looking man, rather foolish-like as otherwise, and, in my opinion, would have made a better landlord than a pedagogue. He seats himself, looks smilingly around, asks some simple questions, and seems well pleased with answers, which I knew I could have made. I was struck; I could hardly believe my own senses; and every moment I looked for the appearance of that rod which had so terrified my apprehensions. The rod, however, made not its appearance. I grew quiet, but still fixed in a stupor of wonder. I gazed at the object before me, and listened with the most awful attention to all the trifling words that dropped from his lips. At last he dismissed us, and I returned home full of satisfaction, and told eagerly to every one around me my expectations and disappointment."

He continued with Mr. Fraser four years, learning only Latin. Greek and mathematics were proscribed. His few surviving class-fellows only recollect him as a little, clever, anxious boy, always near the top of the class, and who never lost a place without shedding tears. He says, in the Sketch, that he was "not without rivals, and one of them at least got the better, being decidedly superior in several points." I have not been able to discover even the name of his solitary victor.

In October, 1785, he passed on to the rector's class, where he remained two years. He was here in the midst of one hundred and forty boys, one-half of whom was a year in advance of the other half, but all in one room, and at the same time, and all under a single master. But this master was Adam, who added some Greek to the Latin, and delighted in the detection and encouragement of every appearance of youthful talent or goodness. "It was from this respectable man, (says Scott,) that I first learned the value

of the knowledge I had hitherto considered only as a burdensome task." Jeffrey, through life, recollects him with the same judicious gratitude. Of this class he says, "During my first year (with Fraser) I acknowledged only one superior; in the last there were not less than ten who ranked above me." Whether they were of the ten or not, the only two of his school-fellows whom I have been able to trace into any distinction, are, the Rev. Dr. Brunton, Professor of Oriental Literature, and Dr. Alexander Munro, the third of his illustrious line, Professor of Anatomy, both in the College of Edinburgh.

Voluntary reading was not much in fashion then with the High School boys; but Jeffrey had not neglected it utterly, or been frivolous in his selection; for besides some travels and natural history, the library register shows that he was rather steady in the perusal of Hume's History, and of Middleton's Life of Cicero.

Thus six years passed away; and without being marked by any of those early achievements or indications which biography seems to think so necessary for its interest, and is therefore so apt to detect, or to invent, in the dawnings of those who have risen to future eminence. He escaped being made a wonder of. Forty years after leaving the school, he testified his recollection of it by contributing £50 towards its removal to its present beautiful building,* and noble site.

One day, in the winter of 1786-7, he was standing on the High Street, staring at a man whose appearance struck him; a person standing at a shop door tapped him on the shoulder, and said, "Ay, laddie! ye may weel look at that man! That's Robert Burns." He never saw Burns again.

In the beginning of the winter of 1787, he was sent to Glasgow College, in his fourteenth year. This is often a

* By Mr. Thomas Hamilton, architect.

dangerous liberation ; but it was very salutary for one whose ambition was already awakened, and whose taste was beginning to feel the literary attractions which proved the delight of his life. Exemption from the task-work of school, and getting into a region of new scenes, and with higher pursuits, and more independence, were the very change which his progress required. I believe that Glasgow was preferred, with a view to the Oxford exhibitions, to which it has long owed so many of its best students, and of which it has in general made so fair a use. None of our other colleges have such academic prizes. If there be any rich Scotchman who is now thinking of perpetuating his name by public munificence, let him not waste himself on hospitals, or such common objects, but let him think of the depressing poverty of his native colleges, and of the honour which a long roll of distinguished men, receiving the higher part of their education through his bounty, has, for a century and a half, conferred on the founder of the Glasgow exhibitions. But if Jeffrey's father had any such view, it was soon abandoned.

He remained at Glasgow for two sessions, that is, from October, 1787, to May, 1788, and from October, 1788, to May, 1789 ; and was at home during the intervening summers. In his first session his classes were the Greek, taught by Professor John Young, and the Logic, by Professor John Jardine. Neither masters nor pupil could have been better suited for each other. They gave him good teaching, and he took them a spirit most anxious to be taught. Jardine, in particular, though recently appointed, and conspicuous neither for ability nor for learning, had already evinced that singular power of making youths work, which, for the forty subsequent years, made his class the intellectual grindstone of the college. Jeffrey seems to have fancied at first that Jardine did not take sufficient notice of him ; but he soon formed a steady friendship with both him and Young, and never forgot what he owed them.

There was an article in the Edinburgh Review in 1821, (No. 70, Art. 3,) on classical education, shortly after Mr. Young's death. It was not written by Jeffrey, but he added a discriminating note explaining Young's merits, (p. 308;) and in addressing the college on his first inauguration as rector, he mentioned him and Jardine in grateful and affectionate terms. Of Jardine, he says: "I cannot resist congratulating myself, and all this assembly, that I still see beside me one surviving instructor of my early youth, —the most revered, the most justly valued, of all my instructors—the individual of whom I must be allowed to say *here*, what I have never omitted to say in every other place, that it is to him, and his most judicious instructions, that I owe my taste for letters, and any little literary distinction I may since have been enabled to attain. It is no small part of the gratification of this day to find him here, proceeding, with unabated vigour and ardour, in the eminently useful career to which his life has been dedicated; and I hope and trust that he will yet communicate to many generations of pupils those inestimable benefits to which many may easily do greater honour, but for which no one can be more grateful than the humble individual who now addresses you."

The only class that I can ascertain his having attended during his second session was the Moral Philosophy, under Professor Arthur; who, being the assistant and successor of Reid, must be supposed to have been a person of some merit.

Professor John Millar, whose subject was Law and Government, was then in his zenith. His lectures were admirable; and so was his conversation; and his evening parties; and his boxing (gloved) with his favourite pupils. No young man admitted to his house ever forgot him; and the ablest used to say that the discussions into which he led them, domestically and convivially, were the most exciting and the most instructive exercises in which they ever took a

part. Jeffrey says that his books, excellent though they be, "reveal nothing of that magical vivacity which made his conversation and his lectures still more full of delight than of instruction; of that frankness and fearlessness which led him to engage, without preparation, in every fair contention, and neither to dread nor disdain the powers of any opponent; and still less, perhaps, of that remarkable and unique talent, by which he was enabled to clothe, in concise and familiar expressions, the most profound and original views of the most complicated questions; and thus to render the knowledge which he communicated so manageable and unostentatious, as to turn out his pupils from the sequestered retreats of a college, in a condition immediately to apply their acquisitions to the business and affairs of the world." (Rectorial Address.)

It has been supposed that this description could only have been drawn by one who had attended the course; but this is a mistake. It was the result of subsequent acquaintance, and of common fame; for he was never one of Millar's pupils. This is confirmed by the class lists, which have been preserved, and do not contain Jeffrey's name; and by two of Mr. Millar's daughters, recently, if not still, alive, who remember their father and Jeffrey's introduction to each other, which took place in the theatre, some years after the latter had left Glasgow. The truth is, that Millar's free doctrines, and his Whig party, were held in abhorrence by Mr. Jeffrey senior; who, after it appeared that the political opinions of Francis were on the popular side, and incorrigible, used to blame himself for having allowed the mere vicinity of Millar's influence to corrupt and ruin his son.

The Rev. Dr. Macfarlane, now Principal of the College of Glasgow, and the Rev. Dr. Haldane, now Principal of the College of St. Mary's, St. Andrews, were fellow-students with Jeffrey at Glasgow, and have given me some information about his state and proceedings there. Prin-

cial Macfarlane says, that, during his first session, "he exhibited nothing remarkable except a degree of quickness, bordering, as some thought, on petulance; and the whim of cherishing a premature moustache, very black, and covering the whole of his upper lip, for which he was much laughed at and teased by his fellow-students." But there was no want of spirit; for Adam Smith had been set up that year for the office of Lord Rector, which depends on the votes of the professors and students, and Principal Haldane recollects seeing a little black creature, whom he had not observed before, haranguing some boys in the green against voting for Dr. Smith. This was Jeffrey. Not that he had any objection either to the Wealth of Nations or to its author; but the Economist was patronised by the professors, which has often made the students take the opposite side. The opposition, however, was withdrawn, and, on the 12th of December, 1787, Smith was installed. It is very unlikely that Jeffrey would miss seeing such a ceremony, in honour of such a man; but an expression in his own Inaugural Address, where he says that Smith "is reported to have remained silent," seems to throw a doubt on his presence.

In his second session he disclosed himself more satisfactorily. Principal Macfarlane says, "He broke upon us very brilliantly. In a debating society, called, I think, the Historical and Critical, he distinguished himself as one of the most acute and fluent speakers; his favourite subjects being criticism and metaphysics." Professor Jardine used to require his pupils to write an exercise, and then to make them give in written remarks on each other's work. Principal Haldane's essay fell to be examined by Jeffrey, who, on this occasion probably, made his first critical adventure. "My exercise (says the Principal) fell into the hands of Jeffrey, and sorely do I repent that I did not preserve the essay, with his remarks upon it. For though they were unmercifully severe, they gave early promise of that critical

acumen which was afterward fully developed in the pages of the Edinburgh Review. In returning my essay to me, the good professor, willing to save my feelings, read some of the remarks at the beginning of the criticism, but the remainder he read in a suppressed tone of voice, muttering something as if he thought it too severe." The first prize in the Logic class was awarded, by the votes of the pupils, to a person called Godfrey; but he was much older than Jeffrey, who, Principal Haldane says, had, all throughout, made "a brilliant figure," and was, "unquestionably, the ablest student of the class."

Some of the students formed themselves into the Elocution Society, which met every Monday evening, for their improvement in recitation. From recitation to acting is but a short step; and, accordingly, they meant to have performed Tancred and Sigismunda, when Principal Macfarlane was to have shone as Rodolpho, and Jeffrey as Sigismunda. But, as an apartment within the college was to have been the theatre, the academical authorities stopped the scheme, to the rage of the disappointed actors. On the last page of his notes of Professor Arthur's lectures, Jeffrey sets forth that, before finally leaving the college, he had one thing to "advise, to declare, to reprobate, to ask, and to wish."—"What I have to advise is, Mr. Arthur and the Principal to pay a little more attention to the graces in their respective modes of lecturing and praying." "What I declare is, that the Faculty has acted in the meanest, most illiberal, and despicable manner with regard to the Elocution Club."—&c. &c.

He began here the practice, to which he steadily adhered, of taking full notes of all the lectures he heard;—not mere transcripts of what the lecturer said, but expositions by the pupil, in his own language, of what he had meant, with discussions of the doctrines. Hence, even the division of separate prelections is seldom regularly observed; but the whole course is run together, in a way which, while

it does not swamp the professor, afforded an excellent exercise for the student, both in thinking and composing.

The turn that his mind was taking is evinced by the following letter to his old master, Dr. Adam, which, for a boy of fifteen, seems to be curious:—“Dear Sir, I do not question that you will be surprised at the freedom of this uninvited intrusion; and when I tell you (by way of apology) that for these some weeks I have been impelled to the deed by the impulse of some internal agent, I question if your surprise will be diminished. As a student of philosophy I thought myself bound to withstand the temptation, and as an adept in logic, to analyze the source of its effects. Both attempts have been equally unsuccessful. I have neither been able to resist the inclination, nor to discover its source. My great affection for the study of mind led me a weary way before I abandoned this attempt; nor did I leave the track of inquiry till I thought I had discovered that it proceeded from some emotion in the powers of the will rather than that of the intellect. My epistolary communications have hitherto been confined to those whom I could treat with all the familiarity of the most perfect equality, and whose experience or attainments I was not accustomed to consider as superior to my own. This, I think, will account and apologize for any peculiarity you may discern in my style. I think it superfluous to assure you, that whatever appearance of levity or petulance *that* may bear, the slightest, the most distant shadow of disrespect was never intended. When I recollect the mass of instruction I have received from your care—when I consider the excellent principles it was calculated to convey—when I contemplate the perspicuous, attentive, and dispassionate mode of conveyance—and, when I experience the advantages and benefits of all these, I cannot refrain the gratification of a finer feeling in the acknowledgment of my obligations. I am sufficiently sensible that these are hackneyed and cant phrases; but, as they express the senti-

ments of my soul, I think they must be tolerated. If you ever find leisure to notice this, I shall esteem your answer as a particular honour; and that you may more easily accomplish this, I inform you that I lodge at Mr. Milne's, Montrose Lodgings. So—this is an introductory letter! It wants indeed the formality of such a performance; but the absence of that requisite may for once be supplied by the *sincerity* with which I assure you I am, dear sir, yours, &c. &c., F. JEFFREY.—Glasgow, January, 1789."

To this communication the worthy rector sent the following answer:—Edinburgh, January, 1789—“I received your favour with great pleasure, and the more so as you say it has proceeded from an emotion in the powers of the will rather than the intellect. I perceive, however, it has been the joint effect of both, and I am happy to observe the latter so well cultivated. For your sentiments and expressions are such as indicate no small proficiency in the studies in which you have been engaged. I should have shown you how much I valued your epistolary communications by acknowledging them in course; but I delayed it till I should have a little more leisure. It is long since I have relinquished the field of metaphysical speculation, otherwise I should answer you in kind. I was very fond of these studies at your time of life; but I have exchanged them, if not for more entertaining, at least for more practical pursuits; as I hope you will soon do, with all the success which your industry and talents merit. You need not be afraid to take up hackneyed phrases; for it is the property of genius to convert every thing to its own use, and to give the most common things a new appearance. I thank you for your very polite compliments. You have handsomely expressed what I have at least attempted, for I have not yet effected what I wished. There is much room for improvement in the plan of education in this country; but there are so many obstacles to it, that I begin to despair of seeing it accomplished. One thing

gives me the greatest satisfaction—that in our universities, and particularly in yours—young men have the best opportunities of acquiring extensive knowledge, and the most liberal principles. I hope you will never forget to join classical elegance with philosophical accuracy and investigation. Even the mechanical part of writing is not below your attention. You see the freedom which you are always to expect from me, and I know you will take it in good part."

It would have been comfortable to Jeffrey's many correspondents if he had taken the rector's hint about the mechanical part of writing. His incapacity of manuscript seems to have been a very early subject of domestic censure. He tells his sister Mary about this time, "I am sure I would willingly forfeit any of my attainments to acquire a good form of writing. For I am convinced much more time and trouble have I bestowed upon this, without effect, than would have been sufficient for the acquisition of a much more complex object. The truth is, I detest the employment. Such a mechanical drudgery! and without any certainty of the attainment of my end." Of course, the detestation prevailed, and a more illegible hand has very rarely tormented friends. The plague of small and misshapen letters is aggravated by a love of contractions, and an aversion to the relief of new paragraphs. There are whole volumes, and even an entire play with the full complement of acts and scenes, without a new line. Here, however, as in every thing else, he improved as he advanced.

To those who only knew him in his maturity, there was nothing more prominent in the character of his intellect than its quickness. He seemed to invent arguments, and to pour out views, and to arrive at conclusions, instinctively. Preparation was a thing with which it was thought that so elastic a spirit did not require to be encumbered. Nevertheless, quick though he undoubtedly was, no slow

mind was ever aided by steadier industry. If there be any thing valuable in the history of his progress, it seems to me to consist chiefly in the example of meritorious labour which his case exhibits to young men, even of the highest talent. If he had chosen to be idle, no youth would have had a stronger temptation or a better excuse for that habit; because his natural vigour made it easy for him to accomplish far more than his prescribed tasks respectably, without much trouble, and with the additional applause of doing them off hand. But his early passion for distinction was never separated from the conviction, that in order to obtain it, he must work for it.

Accordingly, from his very boyhood, he was not only a diligent, but a very systematic student; and in particular, he got very early into the invaluable habit of accompanying all his pursuits by collateral composition; never for the sake of display, but solely for his own culture. The steadiness with which this almost daily practice was adhered to would be sufficiently attested by the mass of his writings which happens to be preserved; though these be obviously only small portions of what he must have executed. There are notes of lectures, essays, translations, abridgments, speeches, criticisms, tales, poems, &c.; not one of them done from accidental or momentary impulse, but all wrought out by perseverance and forethought, with a view to his own improvement. And it is now interesting to observe how very soon he fell into that line of criticism which afterward was the business of his life. Nearly the whole of his early original prose writings are of a critical character; and this inclination toward analysis and appreciation was so strong, that almost every one of his compositions closes by a criticism on himself.

Of these papers only four, written at Glasgow, remain. They are on the Benevolent Affections, the Immortality of the Soul, the Law of Primogeniture, and Sorcery and Incantation. The one on the Benevolent Affections, ex-

tending to about fifty folio pages of ordinary writing, is the earliest of his surviving compositions. Both in its style and its reasoning, it seems to me an extraordinary performance for his age.

He was occasionally assisted in his Glasgow studies by Mr. James Marshall, who was soon afterward appointed one of the college chaplains; and at last had the charge of the Presbyterian congregation of Waterford, where he died in 1827. He was an able and accomplished man, of considerable colloquial powers, and greatly respected. His pupil and he kept up their acquaintance so long as Mr. Marshall lived.

The pupil was subject at this time, or supposed so, to what he deemed superstitious fears; to cure himself of which he used to walk alone at midnight round the Cathedral and its graveyard, which were then far more solitary than they are now.

After leaving Glasgow, in May, 1789, he returned home, and remained in and about Edinburgh till September, 1791, when he went to Oxford. During this long and important interval he seems, fortunately, to have been left entirely to himself. There is no reason to suppose that he attended any of the Edinburgh College classes, except a course of Scotch Law, by Professor David Hume, (Session 1789-90,) and of Civil Law, by Mr. Dick, (Session 1790-91,) and he was not even distracted by companions. He had scarcely a single intimate associate beyond his own relations. The place he most delighted to go to was Herbertshire, in the county of Stirling, belonging to his uncle-in-law, William Morehead, Esq. He was strongly attached to that gentleman, and to all his family. His son Robert was his great friend through life. The place was then entire, well kept, and unpolluted by manufactures; the house full of good plate and good pictures, with a sumptuous cellar, and a capital library. The happiest days of his youth were those spent there. He once made me go with him from Stirling to see it; but it was deformed and impoverished,

and saddened by many painful changes; and he came away, resolving never to see it again.

No period of his youth was passed more usefully than this; when he was left to his own thoughts and to his own occupations. He adhered so steadily in what he calls the “*dear, retired, adored, little window*” of his Lawnmarket garret, to his system of self-working, that, though leading a very cheerful and open air life, the papers of his composition that remain, deducting articles of only a sheet or two, are about sixty in number. This is not mentioned in order to earn for him the foolish and unfortunate praise too often given to prematurity, but as facts in the history of the individual, and because they reveal the culture which was rewarded by the subsequent harvest. Besides various lighter pages, there are among these exercises, translations of Cicero, pro Ligario and pro Milone, an epitome of Gilles’s Greece, a Discourse on Ancient and Modern Learning, Notes from Beattie’s Essays, Remarks on Composition, chiefly in favour of the reality of happy moments, an Essay on Happiness, one on Physiognomy, a clever and well-written refutation of Lavater, one on Poetry, being an excellent discourse on the poetical character, four sermons, and a long poem on Dreaming. Several other papers of a higher order, however excellent, owe their principal interest now to the criticisms on themselves by which they are closed.

Some of these are as follows:—

“Excerpts carptatim from Blackstone’s Commentaries;” being, besides excerpts, a condensed exposition and discussion of the author’s doctrines.

Some translations from Livy; among others, “*The speech of Appian Claudius against the motion for withdrawing the army from the siege of Veii.*” It is not a bad translation; but the best of it is these closing remarks:—“The contents of the preceding pages are certainly not estimable productions, nor are the moments which were spent in their

composition to be recalled with that complacency which generally attends the recollection of well-spent time. They are neither, however, totally contemptible, nor altogether without use. The translation is of that vague and licentious nature which scruples not to insert any extraneous ideas which seem entitled to a place, or to omit such as appear to be unjustly admitted. The habits of the oratorical and florid style that I have assumed, though totally improper for any other species of composition, are sometimes beneficial to those, *who, like me, have some prospect of one day speaking in public.* At any rate, the practice of it, as it increases the store of new expressions, has a necessary and rapid tendency to enrich and enlarge our common language ; and it appears to me that those benefits are more certainly, or at least, more easily, acquired from aiming at this sort of luxuriance in translation, than in original composition, both because it is difficult to invent topics so well adapted to the embellishments of oratory as the genius of the ancients has preserved, and chiefly because the mind, not being at all occupied about the sentiments or sense of the work, is at full leisure to attend to the expression, which, in original composition, must always be a secondary object. It is, after all, however, but a work of indolence ; and so little exertion is requisite to succeed in it, as well as it is possible for me to succeed, that I suspect there is more of ostentation and self-flattery than real love of knowledge, or desire of improvement, in thus formally writing down what I could go on to translate extempore with very little or no hesitation. To all conscientious rebukes of this nature, I reply in a set form,—It is better than doing nothing.—F. J.—December 14th, 1790.”

“ *An Epitome of Lucretius, or the nature of things,*” ends thus:—“ The epitome I have now completed of this beautiful author is, I am sensible, a very disgraceful performance. The poetical beauties of the original are entirely lost ; the ingenious climax of argument which he

has uniformly adopted, as well as the rhetorical declamation he has employed to enforce them, are also necessarily annihilated in a work which only gives the result of the progress, and is contented with barely stating the sum of the reasoning. For any other person's undertaking a work like this, I should, I believe, be as much puzzled to discover a reason, as they may possibly be to account for my attempting it. The explication of the matter is this:— Having heard the philosophy of Lucretius much undervalued, and partly ridiculed, by personages whose condemnation I have been accustomed to regard as an infallible token of merit in the object of it, I resolved as usual to employ my own judgment, either to reverse or confirm their award. A bare perusal I at first thought would be sufficient for this purpose; but so uniformly was I transported and carried away by the charms of the poetry, and the inimitable strength of the expressions, that I generally forgot the subject on which they were displayed—and in the enthusiasm of admiration, lost that cool impartiality which alone can produce a correct judgment. It was necessary, then, to divest the philosophy—the reason—of this poem of that blaze of light, which, by dazzling the senses, prevented them from judging truly. I have done so, and the few preceding pages contain the execution. This is all I think necessary to write for my future information. The result of my experiment I do not choose to perpetuate. My judgment, I hope, for some years, will not at least be decaying—and while that is not the case, I should wish it always to form its daily opinion from a daily exertion. The authority of our own opinion, though perhaps the least dangerous of any, still participates in those inconveniences which all species of authority create, and while a man's powers are unimpaired, it were a lucky thing if he could every day forget the sentiments of the former, that they might receive the correction or confirmation of a second judgment.—Edinburgh, Sept. 3, 1790.”—F. J.

A discourse without any title, but which is on the terms and the ideas, poetry and prose, terminates thus:—"I do not like this piece. But of which of my productions can I not say the same? Here, however, it is said with peculiar energy. The style is glaringly unequal: affectedly plain in the beginning, oratorical in the end. The design is not one, and I am afraid the sentiments not consistent. It is proper to remark that the word prose, which is the only one I can find antithetical to poesy, is not qualified for that station; for it implies, I believe, merely a mechanical distinction, and is properly opposed to verse. This has occasioned part of the confusion I lament. This is not the time to add, or to correct; but before I had done asserting the contrary, I began to suspect that the old ground of discrimination was preferable to my mode of abrogating it, and that we were in the wrong to give a more extensive meaning to the term poetical, when applied to a sentiment, or genius, which ought only to signify that they were peculiarly fit to be exposed in that style, which (though not from any magical or innate sympathy) had been most usually allotted to the expression of those ideas. Were I to proceed to unfold this new idea at full length, I would very likely, in the course of my defence of it, discover some new obstacle to my belief which might return me to my abdicated opinion, or perhaps turn me over to yet another, which might serve me in the same way. I have no mind to encounter such a hydra."—F. J.

This is his apology for a translation of part of Racine's *Britannicus* into blank verse—"This barbarous version of the elegant Racine, I feel myself bound to stigmatize with its genuine character, that as often as the proofs of my stupidity, displayed on the foregoing pages, shall mortify my pride, I may be comforted by the instance of candour set forth on this. At those moments, too, I would likewise have it known, that these verses, if so they may be called, were written down just as they were composed, and with

more rapidity than I in general blot my prose. Fully satisfied with my performance, and fully convinced that any purpose I had in view is abundantly fulfilled, I think it unnecessary to labour through another act, and have just sensibility enough to restrain me from unnecessarily mangling more of so complete an original. I find myself not a little puzzled to assign any use to which this work may be put. Though, upon reflection, I find that it may be of some service to me in the labours of future days, and, by being compared with any of my more correct performances, will serve as a perpetual foil, and stimulate my exertion, by showing me how much my late works surpassed my earlier. It would not perhaps be inexcusable if I should insist that, being written with that design, the multiplicity of its imperfections is commendable.—F. J.—Edinburgh, October 29, 1790."

Four *Speeches* are supposed to be addressed to the House of Commons. The first is entitled "*Orationis Exemplar*," the second, "*Tenuis*," the third, "*Mediocris*," the fourth, "*Sublimis*." *Exemplar* is on the constitutional control of the Commons over the public expenditure. *Tenuis* urges the abolition of the slave trade; and *Mediocris* is a fierce onset on a member who had agreed with him in this, but puts it on a bad ground, and "was somewhat too abstruse and metaphysical for my comprehension." *Sublimis* fulminates against a wretch who had actually defended the trade. But then, "the proceedings of this day, Mr. Speaker, have caused me to feel more shame and sorrow than I ever believed could fall to the lot of integrity and honour; and I am the more severely affected by their oppression, as they have assailed me from a quarter whence they were little expected, and have flowed from a source which I used to regard as the fountain of my happiness and pride," &c.

"*My opinions of some authors*" is a collection of short critical judgments. He says in a note, "I have only

ventured to characterize those who have actually undergone my perusal." Yet they are fifty in number; and, besides most of the English classics, include Fenelon, Voltaire, Marmontel, Le Sage, Moliere, Racine, Rousseau, Rollin, Buffon, Montesquieu, &c. His perusal of many of these must have been very partial; yet it is surprising how just most of his conceptions of their merits and defects are. Many of these criticisms, especially of English writers, such as Dryden, Locke, and Pope, are written in a style of acute and delicate discrimination, and express the ultimate opinions of his maturer years. Johnson, as might be expected of a youth, is almost the only one whom he rates far higher than he did afterward.

There are twelve *Letters*, each somewhat longer than a paper of the *Spectator*, addressed to an imaginary "My Dear Sir," and subscribed by *Philosophus*, *Simulator*, *Proteus*, *Scrutator*, *Solomon*, &c., and all dated July, 1789. They are all on literary and philosophical subjects, lively and well composed. One of them is upon *Criticism*—by no means the best, but now curious from its subject. It explains the importance of the art, and the qualities of the sound critic.

Between November, 1789, and March, 1790, there are thirty-one essays, each about the same length with these letters. They are full of vigorous thinking, and of powerful writing; and a mere statement of these subjects will show his fertility. They are entitled:—

1. On Human Happiness.	13. Of Love.
2. On a State of Nature.	14. Of Man.
3. On Slavery.	15. Of Local Emotion.
4. On Sincerity and Self-Love.	16. Ancient and Modern Learning.
5. On Indolence.	17. On the Fate of Genius.
6. On the Praise of former Ages.	18. On Death.
7. The Superiority of the Sexes.	19. Of a Town Life.
8. Of Man.	20. Of Human Instinct.
9. Of the Love of Fame.	21. On Novel Reading.
10. Of Fancy.	22. On New Year's Day.
11. On Jealousy.	23. On Beaux-ism.
12. Celibacy and Marriage.	24. On Beauty.

25. On the Poetic Character.	28. The Use of Ridicule.
26. On Fortitude.	29. Of Literary Habits.
27. The Use of Philosophy.	30. The Companionable Virtues.
31. Of the Foregoing Essays.	

This last discourse is as follows:—“As I think this sort of trivial writing serves very little purpose in the line of improvement, I believe I am now writing the last essay of this size and style, that shall ever be reduced to legible characters. Dr. Johnson has spent papers in measuring the syllables of blank verse, and surely I may employ part of one to justify my own conduct, and satisfy myself of the reasons which induced me to reduce to permanency the vague and trifling conceptions of my mind upon the most trite topics of general declamation. It was, I thought, and so far I surely did think justly, a very essential point for a young man to acquire the habit of expressing himself with ease upon subjects which he is unavoidably [illegible] one time or another to talk of. This, to be sure, might perhaps have been attained, in a degree adequate to all common occasions, without being at the trouble to write down all that I said, or might have said, on them; and as the habit of writing and speaking are not quite reciprocal, the plan of accustoming myself to speak a great deal upon them may perhaps appear better calculated for this purpose. But besides that I thus avoid many inaccuracies, and as I am in Scotland, many improprieties, I can spare auditors from the fatigue of being the tools and vehicles of my experiment, and save myself from the reputation of talkativeness and folly. But though the habit of speaking easily be a very valuable one, that of thinking correctly is undoubtedly much more so. These, too, cannot be attained by mere mechanical practice, and an earlier exertion of these powers with which every one is endued is absolutely necessary to confirm it.

“The human mind, at least mine, which is all I have to do with, is such a chaotic confused business, such a jumble

and hurry of ideas, that it is absolutely impossible to follow the train and extent of our ideas upon any one topic, without more exertion than the conception of them required. To remedy this, and to fix the bounds of our knowledge and belief on any subject, there is no way but to write down, deliberately and patiently, the notions which first naturally present themselves on that point; or if we refuse any, taking care it be such as have assumed a place in our minds merely from the influence of education or prejudice, and not those which the hand of reason has planted, and which has been nurtured by the habit of reflection. There is likewise a subordinate habit, of no little importance, which is more nearly applicable to the uniformity and size of these essays. Though the subjects of which they treat are very various in point of dignity, it is by no means useless that an equal share of time and paper should be allotted to each. The common routine of mental occupation is so much habituated to little and trivial subjects, that it is requisite to treat even more sublime topics in the same style and fashion, if we would have them received. As in early ages a moral writer is alleged to convey his instruction in the form of a fable, a parable, or a tale, we have as frequent occasion to take up . . . [torn.]

“By habituating myself to this sort of management, I thought I should never want something to say upon trivial subjects,—something to the purpose on more important ones. The only other object I had in view was, perhaps not the least important of the whole, to attempt an imitation of the style and manner of the principal persons who have exhibited their abilities in periodical and short essays. Dr. Johnson, Addison, Mackenzie, and Steele, are the only personages I have attempted to ape, and these it would be absurd in me to cope with. I have at least this consolation, that my emulation can be called by no means little. Of these essays I have little more to say. I have in truth said perhaps already more than they deserve. Though for two reasons

it was impossible to avoid their escape ; the one, that it was to myself the contained apology is addressed ; the other, that I should otherwise have been at a loss how to have filled a sheet, while on the first lines I declared that such was its limitation, an excuse which will often be necessary for many absurdities in the preceding leaves of this pacquet. Simplicity, and not elegance, is the quality I have chiefly studied. In some the language, in others the sentiment, was principally attended to. In all, however, originality of both was as much as possible endeavoured to be displayed."

But the most curious of these youthful compositions is a paper of about seventy folio pages, entitled "*Sketch of my own character*," dated 23d November, 1790, on the first page, and 12th December, 1790, on the last. It is so singular a piece of self analysis for seventeen, that I have sometimes been inclined to put it into the appendix ; but it is better not. Though well written, and full of striking observations, it is seldom safe to disclose descriptions by a man of himself. Even when perfectly candid, and neither spoiled by the affectation of making himself better nor worse than he really was, they are apt to be misunderstood ; and their publication, especially near his own day, is certain to provoke ridicule.

Many younger men have distinguished themselves by more surprising displays of early ability. But (as it seems to me) the peculiarity of Jeffrey's case is, that in these efforts he was not practising any thing that depended on positive rule, or could be found laid formally down in books, or implied chiefly the possession of a good memory. His science was life and its philosophy ; which he prosecuted, apparently, in order to acquire that power which enables its possessor to form correct perceptions of what is true in matters resolving into mere opinion. The merit of these and subsequent exercises, it resolves into judgment and taste, as applied to subjects which admit of no absolute

criterion, and on which there is little to be learned, except from the teacher within. His doctrines and decisions, when he is serious, and not merely upholding a theme, are generally just; and even when they are wrong, the delicacy of the discrimination, the richness of the views, and the animation of the style, are indisputable. The wonder is how such ideas got into so young a head, or such sentences into so untaught a pen.

It was about this time (1790 or 1791) that he had the honour of assisting to carry the biographer of Johnson, in a state of great intoxication, to bed. For this he was rewarded next morning by Mr. Boswell, who had learned who his bearers had been, clapping his head, and telling him that he was a very promising lad, and that “if you go on as you’ve begun, you may live to be a Bozzy yourself yet.”

He left Edinburgh for Oxford towards the end of September, 1791, with his father, his brother, and Mr. Napier, who afterward married his oldest sister. They loitered and visited so much that they took a fortnight to reach their destination. He had been at Oxford before, but only passing through it; and after being left there, felt a pang on his first entire loneliness. It may seem to be rather an unreasonable pang for a youth going to so bright a country as England, and to a place with so many attractions as Oxford. But with whatever cordiality Jeffrey entered into social scenes, it was always on affection that his real happiness was dependent. He ever clung to hearts. As soon as any excitement that kept him up was over, his spirit, though strong, and his disposition, though sprightly, depended on the presence of old familiar friends. He scarcely ever took even a professional journey of a day or two alone without helplessness and discomfort. When left to himself, therefore, for the first time, at a distance from home, it was according to his nature that he should feel a lowness which gave an unfavourable inclination, from the very first, to his Oxford impressions.

This place was not then what it is now. Jeffrey went there eager for improvement, by literary energy; and as he knew it only by the echo of its fame, he thought of it as purely a great seat of learning and of education, and of all the appropriate habits. No wonder that, with such ideas, he was shocked on finding some things in the reality of the place different from what he had expected. This was especially the case at Queen's, the college he entered, which was then not distinguished by study and propriety alone.

However, he neither gave his new comrades nor his own candour a very long trial. In a letter to the late Mr. Robertson, of Inches, one of his Glasgow companions, dated 23d October, 1791, being within a week of his arrival, he describes his fellow students as a set of "*pedants, coxcombs, and strangers*"—the last quality, no doubt, being the worst in his sight. On the 19th he wrote to his sister:—"Dear Mary, Shut up alone in my melancholy apartment,—a hundred miles at least distant from all those with whom I have been accustomed to live,—surrounded by chapels, and libraries, and halls, with hardly an acquaintance to speak to, and not a friend to confide in,—what do I feel—what shall I write? If my writing must be the expression of my sensation, I must speak only of regret, and write only an account of my melancholy. But I feel too keenly the pain of such a sensation, to think of communicating a share of it through the sympathy of those I love. Fancy yourself in my place,—but two days parted from my father and brother,—with the prospect of many irksome and weary days before I shall meet them again—ignorant of the forms and duties of my new situation, diffident of my own proficiency, and apprehensive of destroying my own happiness by disappointing the expectations of my friends—fancy yourself thus, and I think you will be able to comprehend my situation. But it is cruel to make you share in it even in fancy. I should have told you I was happy, and made you so, in the belief of my report; but

let us pass from this. It is a noble thing to be independent—to have totally the management and direction of one's person and conduct; and this is what I enjoy here, (did I not always so?) for except being obliged to attend prayers at seven every morning, and at five every evening—except that, I say, and the necessity of coming to the common hall at three to eat my dinner, and to all the lectures of whatever denomination at some other hours—I have the absolute and uncontrolled disposal of myself in my own hands. I am dependent upon nobody to boil my kettle or mend my fire. Not I. I am alone in my rooms—for you must know I have no less than three—and need not permit a single soul to come into them except when I please. But you wish to know perhaps how long I have enjoyed this monarchy. On Wednesday morning my father, John, and Napier departed for Buxton, and left me here alone and melancholy in a strange land. The rooms I had chosen could not be ready for me before night, and I sauntered about from street to street, and from college to college. I would not recall the sensations of that morning, were not those of the present hour too similar to let me forget them. I felt as if I were exposed to starve upon a desert island; as if the hour of my death were at hand, and an age of torture ready to follow it. I came to dinner at the common hall—got a little acquainted with one or two of the students, and kept in their company, for I was afraid of solitude, till I retired to sleep. Why must I always dream that I am in Edinburgh? The unpacking of my trunk rendered me nearly mad. I cannot yet bear to look into any of my writings. I have not now one glimpse of my accustomed genius nor fancy. Oh! my dear, retired, adored little window; I swear I would forfeit all hopes and pretensions, to be restored once more to it, and to you, could I do it with honour and with the applause of others. But this is almost mad too, I think. I came to study law—and I must study Latin, and Greek, and Rhe-

toric, and Grammar, and Ethics, and Logic, and Chemistry, and Anatomy, and Astronomy—and Law afterward, if I please—that is, I must attend lectures upon all these subjects, if there be any, and pass examinations in them by-and-by. By heaven, I am serious, and they will allow neither absurdity nor inconvenience in the practice."

Six weeks after this he tells his cousin, (and a great favourite, Miss Crockat, afterward Mrs. Murray)—“This place has no latent charms. A scrutiny of six weeks has not increased my attachment. It has, however, worn off my disgust; and knowing that neither the place, nor its inhabitants, nor their manners, can be changed by my displeasure, I have resolved to withdraw that displeasure, which only tortured myself, and to fancy that this is the seat of elegance, and virtue, and science. But I have made a vow not to speak again upon the subject.”

Even the social habits of his new friends were unsatisfactory. “My dear Miss, (his sister Mary, 6th March, 1792,) don’t you think it a pity, when the moon shines in all the majesty of silence—when every breeze is sunk to rest—and every star is glowing on high—don’t you think it a pity to waste such an hour as this—an hour which so seldom shines upon us here—in reading such infernal uninteresting stuff, as is almost too bad for the cloudiest day in November? I think so, upon my soul; and, therefore, after trying two or three pages, and finding I did not understand one syllable, I laid aside Heineccius, half in triumph and half in despair, set the candlestick a-top of him, and took up my pen to converse with you. I wish it were a speaking-trumpet for your sake.”

“Is there any thing, do you think, Cara, so melancholy as a company of young men without any feeling, vivacity, or passion? We must not expect, here, that warmth and tenderness of soul which is to delight and engage us; but let us at least have some life, some laughter, some impertinence, wit, politeness, pedantry, prejudices—something

to supply the place of interest and sensation. But these blank parties! oh! the quintessence of insipidity. The conversation dying from lip to lip—every countenance lengthening and obscuring in the shade of mutual lassitude—the stifled yawn contending with the affected smile upon every cheek, and the languor and stupidity of the party gathering and thickening every instant by the mutual contagion of embarrassment and disgust. For when you enter into a set of this kind, you are robbed of your electricity in an instant, and by a very rapid process are cooled down to the state of the surrounding bodies. In the name of heaven, what do such beings conceive to be the order and use of society? To them it is no source of enjoyment; and there cannot be a more complete abuse of time, wine, and fruit.” “This law is a vile work. I wish I had been bred a piper. For these two months I have conceived nothing distinctly. For all that time I have had a continual vision of I know not what beautiful and sublime things floating and glittering before my eyes. I at first thought it was a fit of poetry; but upon trial I could find neither words nor images. When I offered to lay hold upon any of its beauties, the splendid show vanished and grew confused, like the picture of the moon you may have tried to scoop up out of the water. I am much pleased with your late letters; though there is still a remnant of what I found fault with in your style. You must either be merry, or melancholy, or angry, or envious, when you write again. You have not the ease of a style which is merely calm or indifferent. I avoid it as much as possible.”

“ Except praying and drinking, I see nothing else that it is possible to acquire in this place.” (To Mr. Robertson.)

After only seven months' residence he had a prospect of escaping, and says to his sister, (22d April, 1792,) “ Our long vacation commences about the end of June, and I suppose my residence at Oxford will finally conclude at that

period. But for Scotland—Scotland ! I have not the same assurance of visiting it at that time. Yet I have never heard any thing, even a hint, to the contrary from my father, whose prohibition alone can disappoint me. Ah ! Cara ! you cannot imagine how much I languish to return ; with what visions of happiness my fancy deludes me when I permit it to feign myself practising at the Scotch Bar with plentiful success ! I believe it is the prospect of the expense I must occasion by proceeding on my present line, and the uncertainty of my success, that renders my situation so unpleasing. I have an idea that I am happier than most people I see here ; yet I am the only one that thinks of complaining of his situation, or who does not appear perfectly satisfied with himself."

At last, in June, 1792, his short connection with Oxford closed, and its end was thus recorded by himself. His admission had been attested by the following certificate, or whatever else it is called. "Oxoniæ, Octobris 17mo, Anno Domini 1791. Quo die comparuit coram me Franciscus Jeffrey, e Coll. Reg. Arm., Fil., et subscrispsit Articulis Fidei et Religionis ; et juramentum suscepit de agnoscenda suprema regiæ majestatis potestate ; et de observandis statutis, privilegiis, et consuetudinibus hujus universatis. Sam. Dennis, *pro Vice Can.*" Below which the said Franciscus writes, "Hanc universitatem, tædio miserrime affectus, tandem hilaris reliqui, Ter. Kal. Jul. 1792 ; meque hisce obligationibus privilegiisque subduxì. F. Jeffrey." And on the other side of the parchment he sets down a list of twenty-seven of his acquaintances and a tutor, with a character, in one line of each. The tutor is soon disposed of. "Pedant," is all he gets. Such a one is "honest, plain, sensible ;" one "polite, lazy, quick, dissipated ;" one "merry, good-natured, noisy, foolish ;" one "stiff, ignorant, silent, passive, foolish ;" and so he goes on through the whole twenty-seven ; never, but in one instance, all complimentary. This instance is in the case of

Maton, who I understand to have been his future friend, the late Dr. Maton, described “philosopher,” as he really was.

In spite of the prevailing dissipation and idleness, he himself was a diligent student in his own way. Sir John Stoddart, who knew him there, says that though “not a reading man, he must have devoted much time to literature in general; for his conversation, though always gay and lively, evinced a large store of information.” Accordingly, he himself used to acknowledge, that though, on the whole, disappointed with Oxford, his time there had not been lost totally. This indeed is implied in the fact, that during these nine months, he wrote a great many papers, of which eighteen happen to have been preserved.

Some of them are short and immaterial, such as a translation of the life of Agricola, and another sermon; which last seems to be a species of composition rather seductive to literary laymen. His are about as good as any sermons can be which are got up as mere rhetorical exercises. Several of them were preached, with considerable effect; particularly by Mr. Marshall, whose elocution did justice to the author’s style, and by a late respectable minister of our Established Church, who had been a tutor at Herbertshire, and imposed some of them on his congregation so lately as 1825.

Among the longer papers, there is one on Beauty; which is interesting, as the germ of his treatise on that subject, in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, many years afterward. It is in the form of a dialogue between him and Eugenius, in which the two speakers discuss the nature of the qualities by which objects are recommended to taste. The whole theories of association, of utility, of properties inherent in the objects, or of its all resolving into the state of the observer’s own mind, &c., are discussed with ability and liveliness. He inclines to the association principle, of which the following is his first illustration:—“For what is it,

continued I, stopping and stretching out my arm, as I pointed to the landscape around us,—What else is it, do you think, Eugenius, that enables this retired valley, that peaceful stream, or these velvet hills, to warm and transport my bosom with the satisfaction in which it now overflows—what is it but the talisman, and the proof it affords of the happiness and security of so many of my brethren as are employed and supported, and made happy, in the cultivation and produce thereof. See ! added I eagerly, and grasped his arm with violence—see that little, dim, distant light, which shines like a setting star on the horizon ; is there any thing in the whole circle and series of objects with which we are surrounded on every side, that pleases and affects you more than its soft and tranquil light,—than the long line of trembling fire with which it has crossed the lake at the bottom of the cliff under which it burns ? And what is it that yields this simple object so high a power of pleasing, but that secret and mysterious association by which it represents to us the calmness and rustic simplicity of the inhabitants of that cottage ; by which we are transported within its walls, and made to see and to observe the whole economy and occupation of the household.”

A paper on the poetry of Hayley and Miss Seward is an anticipation, both in style and opinion, of one of his future reviews. Another, without a title, but which, in its matter, appears to be on the Philosophy of Happiness, though able, is vague, for which he thus censures himself: “I cannot write either with the ease or the rapidity with which some time ago I used to astonish myself. I cannot think it a consequence of this, that I should write prolixly and diffusely. This I meant to fill a sheet; it is, as usual, very unequal in style; in some passages ridiculously affected, in others disgustingly careless. The argument is not good, nor the arrangements luminously applied. My meaning is here, however, I believe—scattered and imperfect, to be sure, but I think it is here.”

Another article, without a title, begins thus:—"All that regards man is interesting to me. Every thing which explains his character and his contradictions; every investigation that promises to illustrate the phenomena which he unfolds, I pursue and explore with insatiable eagerness and affection." Then follows what appears to be a discourse on the sources and correctives of human wickedness, which, as usual, is not done justice to by the author himself:—"Opus deductum; the work is brought to a conclusion, has a full and uniform connection, and is the sincere advocate of my own sentiments. This is all that can be said in its favour. The enumeration is defective throughout, the style loose, and, in some passages, intolerably diffuse. Besides, the whole performance is more crowded with commonplace, than a subject on which I was so sincere, should have admitted."

A long "*Speech on the slave, on the model of Demosthenes*," is, of course, not the least like Demosthenes, nor even a speech—it is a declamatory essay. I only mention it for the sake of the description of the style of the model which closes the imitation. "*On the model of Demosthenes!* admirably executed! I wonder which of the characteristics of that orator I had it in my mind to imitate, while I covered these pages. There can hardly be any thing more unlike the style, though at times it is evident I have been jumping at that too; and the solicitude with which I have avoided special narratives and individual illustration, is still more inconsistent with the instant peculiarity of that model. Now I knew all this when I [illegible] my intention of imitation. What was it, then, that I designed to imitate? That perspicuity and simplicity of arrangement, that direct and unremitting tendency to the single object of the discourse, that naked and undisguised sincerity of sentiment, that perpetual recurrence to acknowledged and important positions, which are certainly the most intrinsic and infallible marks of the orations of

Demosthenes. No intermission of argument, no digressive embellishment, no ostentatious collocation of parts, no artificial introduction, no rhetorical transition is to be found in the pages of this accomplished and animated orator. He falls from argument to argument with the most direct and unaffected simplicity ; and at every transition from argument to exhortation, and from exhortation to reproach, he holds the one object of his discourse fully in his own eyes, and in those of his auditors. This I say by way of self-defence, that I may not be thought to have mistaken the character of this writer, whom my imitation evinces me to have understood so ill. In one respect it is similar to my model ;—it is sincere, and has not declined any part of the argument that occurred. Towards the end it is most defective ; the turgid breaking in upon me unawares. I never read ten pages on the question in my life. I pretend, therefore, that this is original.” (14th April, 1792.)

A full and able paper, without a title, contains a spirited argument against the notion of ascribing every odd occurrence to Divine interposition.

These are not the fruits of idleness.

But there was one accomplishment of which he was particularly ambitious, but failed to attain. He left home with the dialect and the accent of Scotland strong upon his lips ; and, always contemplating the probability of public speaking being his vocation, he was bent upon purifying himself of the national inconvenience. “ You ask me (says he to Mr. Robertson) to drop you some English ideas. My dear fellow, I am as much, nay more a Scotchman than I was while an inhabitant of Scotland. My opinions, ideas, prejudices, and systems are all Scotch. The only part of a Scotchman I mean to abandon is the language ; and language is all I expect to learn in England.”

He certainly succeeded in the abandonment of his habitual Scotch. He returned, in this respect, a conspicuously altered lad. The change was so sudden and so complete,

that it excited the surprise of his friends, and furnished others with ridicule for many years. But he was by no means so successful in acquiring an English voice. With an ear which, though not alert in musical perception, was delicate enough to feel every variation of speech ; what he picked up was a high-keyed accent, and a sharp pronunciation. Then the extreme rapidity of his utterance, and the smartness of some of his notes, gave his delivery an air of affectation, to which some were only reconciled by habit and respect. The result, on the whole, was exactly as described by his friend, the late Lord Holland, who said that though Jeffrey “*had lost the broad Scotch at Oxford, he had only gained the narrow English.*” However, the peculiarity wore a good deal off, and his friends came rather to like what remained of it, because it marked his individuality, and it never lessened the partiality with which his countrymen hailed all his public appearances. Still, as the acquisition of a pure English accent by a full-grown Scotchman, which implies the total loss of his Scotch, is fortunately impossible, it would have been better if he had merely got some of the grosser matter rubbed off his vernacular tongue, and left himself, unencumbered both by it and by unattainable English, to his own respectable Scotch, refined by literature and good society, and used plainly and naturally, without shame, and without affected exaggeration.

But though the tones and the words of Scotland ceased to be heard in his ordinary speech, they were never obliterated from his memory. He could speak Scotch, when he choose, as correctly as when the Doric of the Lawnmarket of Edinburgh had only been improved by that of Rottenrow of Glasgow ; and had a most familiar acquaintance with the vocabulary of his country. Indeed, there was a convenience and respectability in the power of speaking and of thinking Scotch at that period, which later circumstances have impaired. It was habitual with persons of

rank, education, and fashion, with eloquent preachers, dignified judges, and graceful women ; from all of whose lips it flowed without the reality, or the idea of vulgarity. Our mere speech was doomed to recede, to a certain extent, before the foreign wave, and it was natural for a young man to anticipate what was coming. But our native *literature* was better fixed ; and Jeffrey knew it, and enjoyed it. He was familiar with the writers in that classic Scotch, of which much is good old English, from Gavin Douglas to Burns. He saw the genius of Scott, and Wilson, and Hogg, and Galt, and others, elicited by the rich mines of latent character and history with which their country abounds, and devoted to the elucidation of the scenes which awakened it ; and, of all their admirers, there was not one who rejoiced more, or on better grounds, in the Scotch qualities that constitute the originality and the vivid force of their writings. He felt the power of the beautiful language which they employed, and were inspired by ; and, as many of his subsequent criticisms attest, was most anxious for the preservation of a literature so peculiar and so picturesque.

He left Oxford on the 5th of July, 1792, having told Miss Crockett the day before, “ To-morrow I take off my gown ; to-morrow I resign the honours of my academical character, and bear myself for ever from these venerable towers.” His absence had diminished even the small number of his former companions ; while his increased age, and greater fitness for society, aggravated the solitude to which he found that he had returned. He used to mention this as the loneliest period of his life. But its loneliness did him no harm. His own family supplied him with objects enough of affection ; and a thoughtful mind like his was not the worse for being concentrated on its own pursuits.

He was now nineteen, and his ideas about what he was to do for subsistence or for reputation began to settle into something definite. Some passages in his letters show that

he had occasional visions of living by literature, and chiefly by poetry. But these were only the casual longings of taste, not the prevailing views of his practical judgment. He was at one time in a great fright lest he should have been made a merchant. On the 30th of April, 1790, he wrote a sheet of observations “On a mercantile life,” not at all favourable to its tendencies on happiness or the mind, and ends by this postscript: “P.S.—The former part of these observations was written while I was myself a little apprehensive of being made an example of their veracity. They are consequently written with the greatest feeling. From the place where the ink first varies, I wrote merely to give a sort of conclusion to my thoughts; and that I might be more ready, should I ever again have occasion to consider them as a matter of personal concern.” But his apprehensions do not seem to have ever been revived; probably because his brother John soon joined a paternal uncle, a merchant in Boston, in America, in the business which had apparently excited them.* He would have made a miserable merchant; for he had a horror of risk and a strong sense of the value of pecuniary prudence. With a liberality of disposition, which was evinced by munificent charity, he had no spirit of adventure, and therefore one shilling certain had charms for him which twenty shillings doubtful could not impart. He would have made himself or his partners crazy by perpetually demonstrating, in the midst of their most solid prosperity, that they were all bankrupt, or must speedily become so.

The law, and in Edinburgh, was plainly his destiny. He thought frequently of the English bar; but his views in that direction were superseded by the strong considerations that decided his friends. His father could not have afforded the expense of his preparation for the English bar;

* His uncle, the brother of Jeffrey’s father, had married a sister of John Wilkes.

and still less of that costly abeyance by which, after being called to it, practice must be waited for. The bar of his own country was cheaper, less precarious, and less irrecoverable from, if it should fail; and a little practice might be expected from some of his own connections. Above all, to the imagination of a father in the position of Mr. Jeffrey senior, the idea of his son being a distinguished counsel in the Supreme Court, and possibly occupying at last a seat on its bench, was perhaps the loftiest conception of family grandeur it could form. He was thus set into the stream of the Scotch bar naturally and irresistibly, and his preparations were made accordingly.

During the winter session of 1792-3, he again attended the Scotch Law lectures of Professor Hume, those of Professor Wyld on the Civil Law, and those of Professor Alexander Tytler on History. He groaned under what he held to be Hume's elaborate dulness. His "*notes taken from*" Tytler, that is, his transfusion of the lectures into his own thoughts, occupy four hundred and thirty-six folio pages of his writing, which would be at least double in ordinary manuscript. There is another course from which it is almost inconceivable that he should have been kept, that of Moral Philosophy by Dugald Stewart. This most eminent person has two reputations, one as an author, and one as a lecturer. Many who knew him only as a philosophical writer, venerate him profoundly, both for his philosophy and for the dignified beauty of his style. But this idolatry is not universal. There are some who, admitting his occasional felicity both of thought and of composition, deem him, on the whole, vague and heavy. But I am not aware that there has ever been any difference of opinion with respect to his unsurpassed excellence as a moral teacher. He was one of the greatest of didactic orators. Mackintosh said, truly, that the peculiar glory of Stewart's eloquence consisted in its having "*breathed the love of virtue into whole generations of pupils.*" He was the great

inspirer of young men. Yet I can discover no evidence that Jeffrey was a pupil in this, to him, congenial class, and many circumstances satisfy me that he was not. Nor can I doubt why. Stewart, though shrinking from every approach to active faction, was known to hold liberal political opinions; and his class door, I believe, was shut to Jeffrey by the same prejudice that had shut John Millar's.

In a letter to his brother in America, of the 1st of December, 1792, he says, "I cannot think of any material alteration that has taken place among your friends since you left them, except it be a most laudable reformation that has been wrought in my person within this last week; whereby, from a lounging, idling, unhopeful kind of fellow, I have become a most persevering and indefatigable student, and have no doubt of turning out President of the Court of Session, or chief mace at the least; for I have brought back my views in some degree to the Scotch bar, and half determined to leave the English dignities to their own disposal."

The steadiest affection always subsisted between these brothers, although in nothing, except their mutual regard, was there any resemblance between them. John continued in America, but not without visits home, till about 1807. His commercial concerns did not end very profitably, and some other misfortunes, operating upon feeble health, clouded his latter years. With a dry manner, he was a sensible and intelligent man, much beloved by the few he cared to cultivate.

On the 11th of December, 1792, Jeffrey entered the Speculative Society. Insignificant as this may seem, it did more for him than any other event in the whole course of his education. Literary and scientific, and especially debating societies have long existed in connection with the College of Edinburgh, as they have occasionally in all the other colleges in Scotland; and so beneficial are these institutions, when properly used, so encouraging both for

study and for discussion, and so well-timed in reference to the condition of young minds, that it is not easy to understand how any college can succeed without them. The Speculative had been instituted in 1764, and had raised itself above all similar establishments in this country. Fifty-eight years more have passed since Jeffrey joined it, and it still flourishes, and can never expire now, except by the unworthiness of the youths in whose days it shall sink. Jeffrey scarcely required it for improvement in composition; but though he had occasionally tried his speaking powers in one or two obscure and casual associations, he had never been a regular working member of a society like this, on which age and reputation conferred importance, where the awe of order was aided by hereditary respect for not very flexible rules, and superiority was difficult, and every effort to attain it formidable. It was exactly what he required, and he gave himself to it with his whole heart. The period for regular attendance was three years; but his voluntary and very frequent visits were continued for six or seven years more. In the course of these nine or ten years, he had a succession, and sometimes a cluster, of powerful competitors. It is sufficient to mention Sir Walter Scott, with whom he first became acquainted here; Dr. John Thomson; John Allen; David Boyle, now Lord President of the Court of Session; the Rev. Dr. Brunton; the Marquis of Lansdowne; the late Charles, Lord Kinnaid; Dr. Headlam; Francis Horner; the late William Adam, Accountant General in the Court of Chancery; John A. Murray, and James Moncrieff, both afterward Judges; Henry Brougham; Lord Glenelg, and his late brother, Robert Grant; James Loch, the Honourable Charles Stuart, and William Scarlett. The political sensitiveness of the day at one time obtruded itself rather violently into this hall of philosophical orators; but it soon passed away, and while it lasted, it only animated their debates, and, by connecting them with public principles

and parties, gave a practical interest to their proceedings. The brightest period in the progress of the society was during the political storm that crossed it in 1799.

Jeffrey read five papers in it, viz:—On Nobility, 5th March, 1793; on the effects derived to Europe from the discovery of America, 28th January, 1794; on the authenticity of Ossian's Poems, 10th February, 1795; on Metrical Harmony, 17th February, 1795; and on the Character of Commercial Nations, 19th January, 1796. The one on Nobility is a defence of inequality of rank, and a discussion of the principles on which it ought to rest, and is greatly above his estimate of it,—“This was written, as the dates testify, in a furious hurry, and delivered in the Speculative within a quarter of an hour after it was finished; in truth, it is not finished. And, so far from having received any correction, it was never honoured by a review. Its doctrines are but faintly impressed on my memory. I believe, however, that I am sincere in the greatest number of my assertions. I am conscious that my theory is in several places highly whimsical; and very sensible that my information and my research were throughout very inadequate to the conduct of a subject intricate in itself, and so deeply sunk in the profundities of history, politics, antiquities, and law. The style, though far from being equal, is greatly too diffuse and pompous throughout. Yet there are few faults more excusable to such expositions as this, than that disorderly superfluity of words which usually swells hasty performances. Anxious to express fully that thought upon which he cannot afford to dwell again, the author confounds himself with a number of tautologous expressions; and, not allowing himself sufficient leisure to ascertain the one luminous and steady position, he flutters rapidly round, giving an imperfect view of what a little coolness might have exhibited entire.”

But it was the debates that he chiefly shone in. He took a zealous part in every discussion. I doubt if he was

ever once silent throughout a whole meeting. The Tuesday evenings were the most enthusiastic and valuable of his week. It is easy to suppose what sort of an evening it was to Jeffrey when he had to struggle in debate with Lansdowne, Brougham, Kinnaird, and Horner, who, with other worthy competitors, were all in the society at the same time. It has scarcely ever fallen to my lot to hear three better speeches than three I heard in that place,—one on National Character by Jeffrey, one on the Immortality of the Soul by Horner, and one on the Power of Russia by Brougham.

It was here that his feeling about the fewness of his friends ceased. His first acquaintance with the persons I have named, and many others of the best friendships of his life, arose in this society.

No wonder that, forty-three years afterward, when presiding at a dinner to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the institution, he, in the course of a beautiful address, thus recalled what he owed it. "For his own part, on looking back to that period when he had experience of this society, he could hardly conceive any thing in after life more to be envied, than the recollection of that first burst of intellect, when, free from scholastic restraint, and throwing off the thraldom of a somewhat servile docility, the mind first aspired to reason, and to question nature for itself, and, half wondering at its own temerity, first ventured, without a guide, into the mazes of speculation, or tried its unaided flight into the regions of intellectual adventure, to revel uncontrolled through the bright and boundless realms of literature and science. True it was, that all those hopes were not realized; that those proud anticipations were often destined to be humbled; but still, could it be doubted that they were blessings while they lasted, or that they tended to multiply the chances of their being one day realized? He was afraid he was detaining them, but he could not avoid stating what had been so long

familiar to his own mind respecting institutions of this kind, which, he considered, under proper guidance, calculated to develop the seeds of generous emulation, to lay the foundation and trace the outlines of that permanent and glorious triumph to be achieved in after life.”*

In June, 1793, he lost his uncle, Mr. Morehead, and saw in that event the ultimate loss of his happy days at Herbertshire. In announcing this calamity to his brother, (29th June, 1793,) he says:—“ On the 18th of this month, we lost a most excellent man, and an undoubted friend, in our worthy Mr. Morehead, who died at Herbertshire, on that day, after a short and distressing illness. A man whose amiable and elegant manners were by far his least accomplishment; whose unruffled gentleness flowed from the pure benevolence of his heart; whom envy could not injure, nor malice hate. He was the only man I have ever known, whose character was eminent by virtue, without the taint of a single vice: the friend of the friendless, the peacemaker, the liberal. There is no event that I at present recollect, that has occasioned me more sorrow.”

On the 30th of August, 1793, he got one of his first views of the scenes he was to act in, by being present, as a spectator, at the case of Mr. Thomas Muir, advocate, who was that day dealt with at Edinburgh for what was then called sedition. There was a story about the mother of that unfortunate man having dreamed that he would one day be lord chancellor. Jeffrey says to Robert Morehead, (31st August, 1793,) “ I shall only add, that I stayed fourteen hours at the chancellor’s trial, who was this day condemned to banishment for fourteen years.” Sir Samuel Romilly saw that trial too. Neither of them ever forgot it. Jeffrey never mentioned it without horror.

“ I have been busy (he writes to John, 4th November, 1793) ever since my return in preparing for my civil law

* See a minute and excellent history of the society, by the ordinary members, published in 1845, p. 68.

trials, which will be held in the beginning of our session, and in endeavouring to amass a sufficient stock of patience to carry me through the relentless fogs with which I am menaced by the winter. I got a fit of spleen on my birthday, I think, by recollecting that I had been crawling betwix heaven and earth for twenty unprofitable years, without use, distinction, or enjoyment."

These trials took place on the 28th of November, 1793. In alluding to the approaching ceremony, he told his brother, (25th September, 1793,) "I have lounged away the weeks which have passed since I wrote you last, in a state of more complete indolence than I have been able to enjoy for several months; and it is not without some emotion of alarm that I look forward to the drudgery which is preparing for me in winter. Yet I cannot say that the interval of inaction has been distinguished by any feeling of peculiar satisfaction, or enlivened by any occurrence which ought to make its remembrance pleasing. Yet tranquillity is delightful; and it is with regret that the mind rouses itself to active exertion, after it has languished for a long time in the pensive bowers of recollection. It is certainly giving a very wretched account of my employment of time; but I live less for the present than for the past, and rarely look into the future, except for the end of some scheme whose birth my retrospection has been contemplating. I have been, however, yawning over my civil law, in which I take my trials on my return; and have besides found time to write a variety of sonnets, and to dissuade Robert Morehead from the temptation of a bishopric."

This dissuasive was a very long letter (25th June, 1793) advising Morchead not to enter the English Church. One of his reasons was, that if he once got into it, he could never get out. "But there are permanent truths and permanent tempers too, after all, no doubt; and if you are really persuaded that no future day, nor any future occurrence can alter your sentiments, I have nothing to do but

to congratulate you, and sigh for myself, who have lived on this earth very nearly one score of years, and am about to pass some professional trials in a few months, who have no fortune but my education, and who would not bind myself to adhere exclusively to the law for the rest of my life, for the bribery of all the emoluments it has to bestow."

This "tremendous epistle," as, from its length, he calls it, did not convince the person it was addressed to. Mr. Morehead took orders, and never once desired to leave that church, to which he was sincerely attached, and into which he carried all the kind and lowly qualities that grace it. After some slender preferments, he became Rector of Easington, in Yorkshire. He published some very pleasing sermons; and though he published very little poetry, its composition was one of his habitual enjoyments. Simple, humble, pious, and benevolent,—devoted to his official duties, of literary habits, contented with every position in which it pleased Providence to place him,—he could not but be beloved by all who knew his quiet virtues. To Jeffrey, who had been his playmate in the fields of Herbertshire, and throughout life was never estranged from him one moment, and knew his very heart, he was an object of special affection. No two creatures of the same species could be more unlike; but in mutual regard they were one.

After committing himself by the rather expensive step of his first trials, there are some interesting gleams in his letters to his brother, of his feelings and anticipations.

"I shall study on to the end of my days. Not law, however, I believe, though that is yet in a manner to begin; but something or other I shall—I am determined. I told you, I think in my last letter, I had just surmounted my first public trials. I think you know that I cannot be brought up on my last till after the interval of twelve months. So that I shall yet have a reasonable period for the preparation of my first speech."—(28th December, 1793.) "I wish you would let me know what sort of a

thing it is to be a merchant, and whether you think I should like it; for, without any affectation, I have very often deep presages that the law will not hold me. There is such a shoal of us, and I have seen so much diligence and genius and interest neglected, that there would be insolence in reckoning upon success. For my own disappointment, I should not grieve above measure, but there are others through whom it may affect me.—(1st February, 1794.)”

“I have been so closely occupied in hearing and writing law lectures ever since November, that a short interval of leisure very much distresses me. For the habit I have acquired, of doing nothing but my task, prevents me from laying it out to any advantage, and the shortness of its duration will not allow me to supplant that habit. If this be a specimen of the life which I am hereafter to lead, though the stupidity which accompanies it may prevent me from feeling much actual uneasiness, yet the remembrance of other days will always be attended with regret. That sort of resignation of spirit which was favoured by the depression and the confinement of winter, is beginning to fail on the approach of spring, and, raised by the rustling of the western gales, and the buds, and the sun, and the showers, my spirits have awakened once again, and are execrating the torpor in which they have been lost. This I write to you merely because it is what is uppermost in my mind at present, and because I would have you accustomed, in due time, not to look for my success as a man of business. Every day I see greater reason for believing that this romantic temper will never depart from me now. Vanity indulged it at the first, but it has obtained the support of habit, and, as I think, of reason.”—(2d March, 1794.) “My notions of philosophy rather lead me to consider a steady contemplation of the worst as the best preparation for its possible occurrence. But my temper is too sanguine, and my activity, I believe, too great, to render it possible for such occasional anticipation to induce a

habit of dejection or remissness. In the mean time, I will tell you truly, again, that my prospects of success are not very flattering; though I cannot help believing that this impression will not greatly abate my efforts to insure it, though it may lighten the disappointment which would attach upon my failure. I do not know whether I may have changed, or you may have forgotten, but I assure you that at present I look upon myself as a person of very singular perseverance, and know very few who will engage in greater labours with expectation less sanguine."—(Glasgow, 29th August, 1794.)

He was possessed of a notion, at this time, that he hated Edinburgh, and liked Glasgow. "After a long abode in the country, I am disgusted with every thing that offers itself to me in the town, and cannot comprehend the force of those motives which have led men to bury themselves there. There was something very soothing to my feelings in the tranquil and easy manner in which my days succeeded one another at Herbertshire; and so much peace, and so much innocence, and so much simplicity, I shall not very easily find in Edinburgh. Indeed, I hate this place more and more, and in January as well as in June. For I am almost alone in the midst of its swarms, and am disturbed with its filth, and debauchery, and restraint, without having access to much of the virtue or genius it may contain."—(Edinburgh, 1st June, 1794.) "It is now nearly two months since I have been in Edinburgh, and I do not yet know how long it may be before I return to it. There are few places which have less hold upon my affections, and few in which I feel myself so truly solitary."—(Glasgow, 29th August, 1794.)

This short-lived fancy was not unnatural at the moment. He had got into none of the society of either place, but the privation which mortified him in his native city was not felt in Glasgow, where he was a stranger. And there was a "*Hebe*" at this time in the latter place.

What he thought the severity, which only meant the dulness, of his legal studies, was relieved by a continuance of literary labour. After leaving Oxford he wrote several papers, besides the Speculative Society essays, which, without any exact observance of chronological order, may as well be disposed of now, before bringing him into his professional life. Very few of them remain.

One is a translation of Tacitus, *de Moribus*, dated October, 1792, of which he says:—"This is very unequally translated. There are, however, more passages to be censured than to be praised. Yet the greatest part of them are capable of amendment, and by taking the pitch from the highest, a translation, certainly not inelegant, might easily be laboured out. The most general fault is prolixity. For incorrectness I take rather to be a quality of every thing written as this has been done, than of any genius whatever. I shall never correct nor copy this, and in time may mistake the blunder of precipitation for that of ignorance."

Two abstracts, one of the *Wealth of Nations*, and one of the *Novum Organum*, though short, bring out the substance of these works with condensed fulness.

A translation of Demosthenes against Ctesiphon is as good as most such translations.—(Herbertshire, 22d July, 1794.)

There is a long and very interesting paper entitled "*Polities*," dated on the top of the first page, "Edinburgh, April 4th, 1793," and at the end of the last—"Edinburgh, 29th December, 1793." It occupies about two hundred folio pages. His criticism on it closes thus:—"There are many things which no man would be justified, even in my opinion, for speaking to the world; but I am not sensible that there is any thing here which I ought to have been ashamed of having thought. My conscience has no kind of burden. My errors, I am sure, are those of ignorance, and cannot, by any party, be construed into

guilt, as long as I have diffidence enough, or prudence enough, to keep them secret. I wrote this partly with the design mentioned in the beginning, (though I have become a great deal more neutral since April,) and partly that I might know what I thought, and upon what reasons my opinions were founded,—circumstances in which, if I do not greatly err, many would require some illumination. The style of this work is not so unequal as that of some of my other compositions, though certainly most tolerable where it has been least attended to. I think just so much of this work, that I wish I had bestowed more attention on its composition, and adhered more to plainness and to practicability. Yet it is not all system, and I am sure there is none of it party."

The statement that "There are many things which no man would be justified, even in my opinion, for speaking to the world," is a striking indication of the terror which was then felt of any disclosure of independent opinions. So far as I can judge, there is not one expression or one sentiment in the whole paper which might not have been avowed, though perhaps not with the approbation of every Tory, at any time within the last forty, or even fifty years; yet he was then afraid to utter them. It is a disquisition on British affairs, foreign and domestic. After a powerful exposition of the principle, that forms of government are of far less importance to the happiness of the people than the good administration of any system to which they have been accustomed, he discusses the duties and the rights of the rulers and of the subjects of this country, under the constitution which has grown round them. His doctrines are those of a philosophical Whig; firm to the popular principles of our government, and consequently firm against any encroachment, whether from the monarchical or the democratical side. He is hostile to the recently proclaimed war with France, and to the policy and objects of the party that had embarked in it. But it is a perfectly fair and

temperate examination of matters always open to discussion, and is written with great richness of reflection and illustration, and with great force and animation of style. The views expressed in this essay adhered to him through life. Indeed, he says that they will. His beginning is, "History will record the events which signalize the present crisis, and posterity will contemplate with a cool and unprejudiced eye those parties, principles, and actions, which now divide mankind so widely. But history will not record, what it may be pleasant hereafter to review, the personal opinions and present impressions of an observer, who, if he cannot pretend the impartiality of absolute indifference, may yet claim the credentials of candour, sincerity, and moderation, in the principles he has embraced. Though the frenzy of opposition may often beget a similar violence, in a mind of itself disposed to accommodation, and though several circumstances of unpleasing recollection have attempted to impose upon my judgment by such exasperation, I am pretty confident that the opinion I am now about to deliver will continue to influence my political sentiments as long as subjects, in themselves so cumbrous and fatiguing, shall retain any decided place in my mind. I am enrolled in no party, and initiated in no club; habit has added nothing to the confidence of my trust in reason, nor raised any illegal obstacle to the repetition of her triumphs by the demolition of my errors. Neither vanity, nor interest, nor avarice, have hitherto had any effect in warping the political tenets of one who is too mean to catch a glimpse of glory, and too honest to belie the assertion of his soul for the sake of riches or promotion. Those seductive principles may one day overthrow that integrity which they have not yet assailed; and even I may smile with contempt, as I overlook those words, and remember that they were written neither to be seen nor to be obeyed, but merely to perpetuate the memory of that innocence which is never despised till it has ceased to exist."

I am tempted to quote one other passage, neither from its importance nor its originality, but because it evinces a spirit in advance of the age. If there was any principle that was reverenced as indisputable by almost the whole adherents of the party in power sixty, or even fifty, or perhaps even forty years ago, it was, that the ignorance of the people was necessary for their obedience to the law. A concession was always made in Scotland, in favour of such teaching as might at least enable the poor to read the Bible; but even this was a step beyond England; and in both countries the expediency of a more extended and a higher popular education was considered as a mere Jacobinical pretence. Jeffrey, writing in 1793, says: "The violence of the multitude is indeed to be dreaded, but it will not be violent unless it be uninformed. It is superfluous to add, that a people who are enlightened are likely to be in the same proportion contented; and that the diffusion of knowledge is yet more essential, perhaps, to their tranquillity, than it is to their freedom. Those who are in possession of the truth, and of the principles on which it is founded, will not be moved by all the artifice that sophistry can employ, and will laugh to scorn those dangerous impostors who succeed in seducing the ignorant. As a wise man rarely suffers from the errors which delude the vulgar, so that vulgar, when informed and illuminated, may listen in safety to the charms against which it was not proof before; as the twig that was agitated with any breeze, may come at length to sustain the force of the tempest without bending."

But the most curious of all his early pursuits was the poetical one. There is nothing wonderful in any young man being allured into this region; because, of all ambitions, poetry, where its laurels appear to be attainable, is the least capable of being resisted; and where the rhythmical form is mistaken for the poetical substance, it is reduced to an easy, yet attractive mechanical art. But none

of Jeffrey's lines were written, as youthful lines so often are, for immediate display. His being in the habit of making verses seems to have been known only to his brother and sisters, and to Robert Morehead; and, like his other early exertions, were almost never mentioned afterward by himself. If he had practised the art as a mere superficial accomplishment, he would have cared less for his addiction to it being known. But he plainly had a higher and more distant end in view, and sometimes fancied that the glories of genuine poetry were not certainly beyond his grasp.

Writing from Oxford to his sister, (25th October, 1791,) he says, "*I feel I shall never be a great man unless it be as a poet;*" and, "*I have almost returned to my water system, for I have scarcely tasted wine this fortnight; of course I have spent it mostly in solitude, and I think most pleasantly of any since I came here.* This way of life does certainly nourish a visionary and romantic temper of mind, which is quite unfit for this part of the world, and which makes one first be stared at, and then neglected. But my aim is to live happily without regard to these things. Notwithstanding all this, *my poetry does not improve; I think it is growing worse every week.* *If I could find in my heart to abandon it, I believe I should be the better for it.* But I am going to write over my tragedy in a fortnight. Though my own compositions please me less, those of higher hands delight me more than ever."—(7th December, 1791.)

He by no means abandoned it. On the contrary, between 1791 and 1796, inclusive, he exercised his faculty of verse considerably. The largest portion of the result has disappeared. But enough survives to attest his industry, and to enable us to appreciate his powers. There are some loose leaves and fragments of small poems, mostly on the usual subjects of love and scenery, and in the form of odes, sonnets, elegies, &c.; all serious, none personal or satirical. And besides these slight things, there is a com-

pleted poem on Dreaming, in blank verse, about 1800 lines long. The first page is dated, Edinburgh, May 4, 1791; the last, Edinburgh, 25th June, 1791; from which I presume that we are to hold it to have been all written in these fifty-three days—a fact which accounts for the absence of high poetry, though there be a number of poetical conceptions and flowing sentences. Then there is a translation into blank verse of the third book of the Argonauticon of Apollonius Rhodius. The other books are lost, but he translated the whole poem, extending to about six thousand lines. He says of this work to Mr. Morehead—(12th Dec., 1795)—“I have also written six hundred lines, in a translation of the Argos of Apollonius, which I am attempting in the style of Cowper’s Homer; and it is not much further below him, than my original is under his.” And I may mention here, though it happens to be in prose, that of two plays, one, a tragedy, survives. It has no title, but is complete in all its other parts. His estimate of its merits does certainly not savour of conceit. “Edinburgh, 13th February, 1794.—The first sheet of this I brought with me from Oxford in July, 1792, and I have completed it by writing two or three lines every two or three months since. Upon the whole, it is exceedingly flat, slow, and uninteresting. My aim was to steer free of the pompous and sputtering magnificence of our rude tragedies, and into which I had some tendency to fall. This has been pretty well accomplished; but I have all the faults of the opposite extreme. Languid, affected, pedantic, the fable has no meaning, and the characters nothing characteristic. There is too little action throughout, and the whole piece is but a succession of conversations. Yet the simplicity of diction, as well as of soul, which I have endeavoured to exhibit, prevent these defects from being very disgusting, and make it rather drowsy than abominable.” He was fond of parodying the Odes of Horace, with applications to modern incidents and people, and did

it very successfully. The *Otium Divos* was long remembered. Notwithstanding this perseverance, and a decided poetical ambition, he was never without misgivings as to his success. I have been informed that he once went so far as to leave a poem with a bookseller, to be published, and fled to the country; and that, finding some obstacle had occurred, he returned, recovered the manuscript, rejoicing that he had been saved, and never renewed so perilous an experiment.

There may be some who would like to see these compositions, or specimens of them, both on their own account, and that the friends of the many poets his criticism has offended might have an opportunity of retaliation, and of showing, by the critic's own productions, how little, in their opinion, he was worthy to sit in judgment on others. But I cannot indulge them. Since Jeffrey, though fond of playing with verses privately, never delivered himself up to the public as the author of any, I cannot think that it would be right in any one else to exhibit him in this capacity. I may acknowledge, however, that, so far as I can judge, the publication of such of his poetical attempts as remain, though it might show his industry and ambition, would not give him the poetical wreath, and of course would not raise his reputation. Not that there are not tons of worse verse published, and bought, and even read, every year, but that their publication would not elevate Jeffrey. His poetry is less poetical than his prose. Viewed as mere literary practice, it is rather respectable. It evinces a general acquaintance, and a strong sympathy, with moral emotion, great command of language, correct taste, and a copious possession of the poetical commonplaces, both of words and of sentiment. But all this may be without good poetry.

One of the poetical qualities—a taste for the beauties and the sublimities of nature—he certainly possessed in an eminent degree. His eye, which had a general activity of

observation, was peculiarly attracted by these objects ; and this not for the mere exercise of watching striking appearances, but for the enjoyment of the feelings with which they were connected. The contemplation of the glories of the external world was one of his habitual delights. All men pretend to enjoy scenery, and most men do enjoy it, though many of them only passively ; but with Jeffrey it was indispensable for happiness, if not for existence. He lived in it. The earth, the waters, and especially the sky, supplied him in their aspects with inexhaustible materials of positive luxury, on which he feasted to an extent which those who only knew him superficially could not suspect. Next to the pleasures of duty and the heart, it was the great enjoyment.

On the 16th of December, 1794, he was admitted to practise at the bar.

No idea can be formed of the prospects which this privilege opened, or of the good which he ultimately did, without knowing something of the political state of Scotland when he thus came into public life.

Every thing was inflamed by the first French Revolution. Even in England all ordinary faction was absorbed by the two parties—of those who thought that that terrible example, by showing the dangers of wrongs too long maintained, was the strongest reason for the timely correction of our own defects,—and of those who considered this opinion as a revolutionary device, and held that the atrocities in France were conclusive against our exciting sympathetic hopes, by any admission that curable defect existed. It would have been comfortable if these had been merely argumentative views upon a fair subject of amicable discussion. But they were personal as well as political feelings, and separated people into fierce hostile factions, each of which thought that there was no safety for the state, or for itself, without the destruction of the other. Never, since our own Revolution, was there a period when public life was so ex-

asperated by hatred, or the charities of private life were so soured by political aversion.

If this was the condition of England, with its larger population, its free institutions, its diffused wealth, and its old habits of public discussion, a few facts will account for the condition of Scotland.

There was then in this country no popular representation, no emancipated burghs, no effective rival of the Established Church, no independent press, no free public meetings, and no better trial by jury, even in political cases, (except high treason,) than what was consistent with the circumstances that the jurors were not sent into court under any impartial rule, and that, when in court, those who were to try the case were named by the presiding judge. The Scotch representatives were only forty-five, of whom thirty were elected for counties, and fifteen for towns. Both from its price and its nature, (being enveloped in feudal and technical absurdities,) the elective franchise in counties, where alone it existed, was far above the reach of the whole lower, and of a great majority of the middle, and of many even of the higher ranks. There were probably not above 1500, or 2000 county electors in all Scotland; a body not too large to be held, hope included, in government's hand. The return, therefore, of a single opposition member was never to be expected. A large estate might have no vote; and there were hundreds of votes, which, except nominally, implied no true estate. The return of three or four was miraculous, and these startling exceptions were always the result of local accidents. Of the fifteen town members, Edinburgh returned one. The other fourteen were produced by clusters of four or five unconnected burghs, electing each one delegate, and these four or five delegates electing the representative. Whatever this system may have been originally, it had grown, in reference to the people, into as complete a mockery as if it had been invented for their degradation. The people had nothing to do with

it. It was all managed by town councils, of never more than thirty-three members, and every town council was self-elected, and consequently perpetuated its own interests. The election of either the town or the county member was a matter of such utter indifference to the people, that they often only knew of it by the ringing of a bell, or by seeing it mentioned next day in a newspaper; for the farce was generally performed in an apartment from which, if convenient, the public could be excluded, and never in the open air. The Secession Church had not then risen into much importance. There were few Protestant Dissenters. Even the Episcopalians were scarcely perceptible. Practically, Papists were unknown. During a few crazy weeks there had been two or three wretched newspapers, as vulgar, stupid, and rash, as if they had been set up in order to make the freedom of the press disgusting; and with these momentary exceptions, Scotland did not maintain a single opposition newspaper, or magazine, or periodical publication. The nomination of the jury by the presiding judge was controlled by no check whatever, provided his lordship avoided minors, the deaf, lunatics, and others absolutely incapable. Peremptory challenge was unknown. Meetings of the adherents of government for party purposes, and for such things as victories and charities, were common enough. But, with ample materials for opposition meetings, they were in total disuse. I doubt if there was one held in Edinburgh between the year 1795 and the year 1820. Attendance was understood to be fatal. The very banks were overawed, and conferred their favours with a very different hand to the adherents of the two parties. Those who remember the year 1810 can scarcely have forgotten the political spite that assailed the rise of the Commercial Bank, because it proposed, by knowing no distinction of party in its mercantile dealings, to liberate the public, but especially the citizens of Edinburgh. Thus, politically, Scotland was dead. It was not unlike a village at a great

man's gate. Without a single free institution or habit, opposition was rebellion, submission probable success. There were many with whom horror of French principles, to the extent to which it was carried, was a party pretext. But there were also many with whom it was a sincere feeling, and who, in their fright, saw in every Whig a person who was already a republican, and not unwilling to become a regicide. In these circumstances, zeal upon the right side was at a high premium, while there was no virtue so hated as moderation.

If there had been any hope of ministerial change, or even any relief by variety of ministerial organs, the completeness of the Scotch subjugation might have been less. But the whole country was managed by the undisputed and sagacious energy of a single native, who knew the circumstances, and the wants, and the proper bait of every countryman worth being attended to. Henry Dundas, the first Viscount Melville, was the Pharos of Scotland. Who steered upon him was safe; who disregarded his light was wrecked. It was to his nod that every man owed what he had got, and looked for what he wished. Always at the head of some great department of the public service, and with the indirect command of places in every other department; and the establishments of Scotland, instead of being pruned, multiplying; the judges, the sheriffs, the clergy, the professors, the town councillors, the members of parliament, and of every public board, including all the officers of the revenue, and shoals of commissions in the military, the naval, and the Indian service, were all the breath of his nostrils. This despotism was greatly strengthened by the personal character and manners of the man. Handsome, gentlemanlike, frank, cheerful, and social, he was a favourite with most men, and with all women. Too much a man of the world not to live well with his opponents when they would let him, and totally incapable of personal harshness or unkindness, it was not unnatural that his offi-

cial favours should be confined to his own innumerable and insatiable partisans. With such means, so dispensed, no wonder that the monarchy was absolute. But no human omnipotence could be exercised with a smaller amount of just offence. It is not fair to hold him responsible for the insolence of all his followers. The miserable condition of our political institutions and habits made this country a noble field for a patriotic statesman, who had been allowed to improve it. But this being then impossible, for neither the government nor a majority of the people wished for it, there was no way of managing except by patronage. Its magistrates and representatives, and its other base and paltry materials, had to be kept in order by places, for which they did what they were bidden ; and this was really all the government that the country then admitted of. Whoever had been the autocrat, his business consisted in laying forty-five Scotch members at the feet of the government. To be at the head of such a system was a tempting and corrupting position for a weak, a selfish, or a tyrannical man. But it enabled a man with a head and a temper like Dundas's, to be absolute, without making his subjects fancy that they ought to be offended. Very few men could have administered it without being hated. He was not merely worshipped by his many personal friends, and by the numerous idolaters whom the idol fed ; but was respected by the reasonable of his opponents ; who, though doomed to suffer by his power, liked the individual ; against whom they had nothing to say, except that he was not on their side, and reserved his patronage for his supporters. They knew that, though ruling by a rigid exclusion of all unfriendly who were too proud to be purchased, or too honest to be converted, he had no vindictive desire to persecute or to crush. He was the very man for Scotland at that time, and is a Scotchman of whom his country may be proud. Skilful in parliament, wise and liberal in council, and with an almost unrivalled power of administration, the usual

reproach of his Scotch management is removed by the two facts, that he did not make the bad elements he had to work with, and that he did not abuse them; which last is the greatest praise that his situation admits of.

In addition to common political hostility, this state of things produced great personal bitterness. The insolence, or at least the confidence, of secure power on the one side, and the indignation of bad usage on the other, put the weaker party, and seemed to justify it, under a tacit proscription. It both excluded those of one class from all public trust, which is not uncommon, and obstructed their attempts to raise themselves any how. To an extent now scarcely credible, and curious to think of, it closed the doors and the hearts of friends against friends. There was no place where it operated so severely as at the bar. Clients and agents shrink from counsel on whom judges frown. Those who had already established themselves, and had evinced irresistible powers, kept their hold; but the unestablished and the ordinary had little chance. Everywhere, but especially at the bar, a youth of a Tory family who was discovered to have imbibed the Whig poison was considered as a lost son.

These facts enable us to appreciate the virtuous courage of those who really sought for the truth, and having found it, as they thought, openly espoused it. But they were not without encouragement. Though externally the people were crushed, the spirit, always kindled by injury, was not extinguished. The shires, with only a few individual exceptions, were soulless. But, in all towns, there were some thinking, independent men. Trade and manufactures were rising—the municipal population was increasing—the French Revolution, with its excitement and discussion of principles, was awakening many minds. The great question of burgh reform, demonstrably clear in itself, but then denounced as revolutionary, had begun that deep and just feeling of discontent, which operated so beneficially

on the public spirit of the citizens all over Scotland for the next forty years. The people were silent from prudence. A first conviction of simple sedition by a judge-named jury was followed by transportation for fourteen years. They therefore left their principles to the defence of the leading Whigs; who, without any special commission, had the moral authority that belongs to honesty and fearlessness. These were chiefly lawyers; whose powers and habits connected them with public affairs;—a bold and united band, without whose steadiness the very idea of independence would, for the day, have been extinguished in Scotland.

They had a few, but only a few, external supporters; but these bore powerful names. It was only the strong who durst appear. In spirit Mr. James Gibson (afterward Sir James Craig) was in the Society of Writers to the Signet, our second legal body, what Henry Erskine was in the Faculty of Advocates, our first. The Rev. Sir Harry Moncrieff stood out in the church; John Allen and John Thomson in the medical profession; Dugald Stewart and John Playfair in the college. It was chiefly, however, by their reputations, and the influence of their known opinions, that these and others promoted the cause; because, Mr. Gibson excepted, they did not engage in the daily schemes and struggles of the party. Several other places had their independent men, who dared to show their heads. But the prevailing impression was fear; particularly on the part of those whose livelihood depended on the countenance of the upper ranks, and not on their own powers. But this worked for good ultimately. The necessity of suppressing their opinions increased the attachment with which these opinions were secretly clung to, and cherished an intensity of public principle which easier times do not require, and therefore, except in very thinking minds, rarely attain. The fruit appeared in due time.

In so far as Scotland was concerned, there could be no doubt of the policy of this party, and little ground for de-

spair. The sole object was to bring Scotland within the action of the constitution. For this purpose it was plain that certain definite and glaring peculiarities must be removed, and the people be trained to the orderly exercise of public rights ; and, for the promotion of these ends, all sound principles of liberty, to whatever region applicable, must be explained and upheld. The imperfections of the old Scotch system were too gross to allow any one, who had a due confidence in the force of truth, to doubt their ultimate correction. And thus, instead of any vague generality of reform, the attention of our reformers was concentrated on certain black spots. Those in power shut their eyes and their ears to all such matters ; and cheered by a great majority of injudicious friends, did not perceive that, below their triumphant surface, there was setting in that steady under-current, which, to the increased safety of the community, has swept these abominations away. That the flag was kept flying, was owing almost entirely to the spirit of the Whig lawyers.

The merit of these men can only be measured by the fact, that the state of affairs made a long sway for the government party, and, consequently, a long exclusion of their opponents from all appointments, nearly certain ; so certain, that no barrister could espouse Whiggism without making up his mind to renounce all hope of official promotion. If the Whigs had been as steadily in power, it would probably have been the same with the Tories ; but this does not lessen the admiration due to those, no matter on what side, who sacrificed their interests to their principles. It was fortunate for the Whig counsel, especially the juniors, that the advantage of the proscription fell to them. It made them feel that they had nothing but themselves to rely upon ; while their opponents felt exactly the reverse. The latter were seduced to signalise themselves by party violence, and to rely on its official pay ;—the former, seeing themselves debarred from all that patronage could

confer, were compelled to seek those better things over which it has no control. They found these in leisure and study, in elevation of character, and in the habit of self-dependence. They have since reaped their distant, and seemingly hopeless harvest ; not so much in their own rise, as in that rise of public opinion which their conduct did so much to produce. But they had a long and severe winter to pass through ; and they, almost alone of the liberal, had courage to stand out through its darkest days.

It is very difficult to resist naming and describing some of these men and their measures. But this cannot be converted from a personal into a general, or even a local history ; and, therefore, those not so intimately connected with Jeffrey as to have affected his life, must be passed over. As to himself, his public opinions, or rather their principles, were coeval with the growth of his reason. His private writings show that they were not formed without study and reflection, and his purity in adopting them may be inferred from their all being against his immediate interest. Nothing beyond his conviction of their soundness is necessary in order to account for his adoption of them. If accidental circumstances co-operated, they probably consisted in the attraction of free principles to such a mind ; in his abhorrence of the prevailing local persecution, and in the gloomy intolerance of his Tory father, contrasted with the open-hearted liberality of his Whig uncle of Herbertshire.

The legal profession in Scotland had every recommendation to a person resolved, or compelled, to remain in this country. It had not the large fields open to the practitioner in England, nor the practicable seat in the House of Commons, nor the lofty political and judicial eminences, nor the great fortunes. But it was not a less honourable or a less intellectual line. It is the highest profession that the country knows ; its emoluments and prizes are not inadequate to the wants and habits of the upper classes ; it

has always been adorned by men of ability and learning, who are honoured by the greatest public confidence. The law itself is not much upheld by the dim mysteries which are said elsewhere to be necessary in order to save law from vulgar familiarity. With a little deduction on account of the feudalism that naturally adheres to real property, it is perhaps the best and the simplest legal system in Europe. It is deeply founded in practical reason,—aided by that conjoined equity which is equity to the world as well as to lawyers. There can be no more striking testimony to its excellence than the fact, that most of the modern improvements in English law, on matters already settled in the law of Scotland, have amounted, in substance, to the unacknowledged introduction of the Scotch system. Its higher practice has always been combined with literature, which, indeed, is the hereditary fashion of the profession. Its cultivation is encouraged by the best and most accessible library in this country, which belongs to the bar. In joining this body, Jeffrey raised a far slighter obstacle to his favourite pursuits than if he had chosen almost any other line.

The mere "*Outer House*" presented every thing calculated to prepare him for any other destination toward which he might have turned. This Outer House is a large, handsome, historical chamber, in immediate connection with the Courts,—the Westminster Hall of Scotland. It is filled, while the courts are sitting, by counsel, and all manner of men of the law, by the public, and by strangers, to whom the chief attraction is the contemplation of the learned crowd moving around them. For about two centuries this place has been the resort and the nursery of a greater variety of talent than any other place in the northern portion of our island. It has seen a larger number of distinguished men—it has been the scene of more discussed public principles, and projected public movements—it has cherished more friendships. When Jeffrey sat on its remoter benches,

and paced its then uneven floor, so did Scott, and Cranstoun, and Thomas Thomson, and Horner, and Brougham, and Moncrieff, and many others who have since risen into eminence. These young men had before them the figures and the reputations of Blair, and Erskine, and Charles Hope, and Clerk, and other seniors, on whom they then looked with envy and despair. But they had the library, and each other, and every enjoyment that society, and hope, and study, or gay idleness, could confer. In those days, as ever since, the intercourse of the lawyers was very agreeable. They were, and are, a well-conditioned, joyous, and, when not perverted by politics, a brotherly community; without the slightest tinge of professional jealousy; and so true to their principles, whatever they may be, that there have not been above two or three known political renegades among them during the last fifty years. May the young man walking the boards of that hall, in the opening of his legal career, be inspired by the recollection of the eminent persons who, throughout so many generations, have successfully been in his position, and in his obscurity, and ever keep himself right by remembering what is due to the genius of the place.

We had no civil juries then, which cut off one great field of forensic display. But this was made up for, to a certain extent, by the Supreme Court, consisting of no fewer than fifteen judges, who formed a sort of judicial jury, and were dealt with as such. But the pen was at that time, and for a long while afterward, a more used instrument than the tongue. It was more inglorious, but it did more work. The great mass of the business was carried on by writing—not merely by written *pleadings*, but by the whole circumstances and legal merits of every cause being laid before the judges in the form of written or of printed sentiment and argument. Occasionally, when the learning in a cause is nice and profound, the deliberation and accuracy of written discussion has its advantages. But, intolerably,

this form was then applied to every thing: and this down till 1825. Justice could often afford to be deaf, but never to be blind. What generations of dumb, but able and learned drudges the custom bred! All counsel, even the speaking ones, were often obliged to practise it; but there were whole tribes of silent and laborious men who did nothing else. Many of them produced a quarto volume every day. They actually fed themselves, and married, and reared families, and left successions upon it. This was always the first avenue of the juniors; whose considerate toil often crammed their ungrateful seniors with the matter out of which the senior's lips extracted all the applause. Jeffrey's power of writing made this an easy line for him, and many an admirable contribution did he furnish in it.

His talents and his reputation, which among young men was very considerable, were his only ground of hope in his first public scene. These were counteracted by his public opinions, and by an unpopularity of manner which it is somewhat difficult to explain. People did not like his English, nor his style of smart sarcastic disputation, nor his loquacity, nor what they supposed to be an air of affectation. These peculiarities gradually faded, and people got accustomed to them; but they operated against him throughout several of his early years. He himself was aware of this, and felt it. He writes to his brother (27th June, 1796) of "*the few to whom I am dear;*" and envies John, who had gained so many friends, and seen so much of the world, "*while I have been languishing within my island limits, scarcely known to anybody, and not much liked by those who do know me.*"

It seems to be necessary that there should be a story about the first fee of every lawyer who rises high. Jeffrey's is, that returning home one day with a guinea, he cast it to his grandmother, saying, "There is my first fee, Granny; give it to your old woman at Leith."

But he was not much troubled with fees then. He always got a few from his father's connections ; enough to show what he was ; but there he stuck, and it was just as well.

There were at this time several able men on the bench, and at the bar, of whom it is very tempting to try to give some account. But this would be improper in a narrative which aims at merely explaining Jeffrey ; and, therefore, I mention those persons only who affected his life, and not those, however eminent or singular, with whom he had only a casual or a professional connection. I adhere to the principle with regret, because some of these persons merit preservation on account of their eminence ; and some, grown in the preceding century, were too picturesque to have their like ever seen again.

For a long while his professional acquaintance was exceedingly slight, scarcely extending beyond those friends of his youth who had gone to the bar with him. Of the seniors, there seem to have been only two who noticed him ; with both of whom he lived in great friendship till death removed them.

One of these was the late Mr. Archibald Fletcher, who died at a very advanced age in the year 1828. He was only a few years younger than Jeffrey at the bar, but was much older in life. It is, perhaps, unnecessary for me to say any thing of this most excellent man, because his merits have been described, with his usual discrimination and force, by Lord Brougham (Speeches 3, 346). A pure and firm patriot, neither the excitement of the French Revolution, nor the long and seemingly hopeless slumber that followed it, nor the danger to which every marked friend of the popular cause was then exposed, had any effect in altering his course of calm resolute benevolence. Throughout all the chances that occurred in his long life he was the same, ever maintaining right opinions,—never neglecting any opportunity of resisting oppression, in whatever quarter of the globe it might be practised or threatened, ashamed

of no romance of public virtue—always ready to lead, but, from modesty, much readier to follow, his Whig party in every conflict of principle,—and all with perfect candour and immoveable moderation. His more peculiar home subject was the reform of our burghs, a matter, however, that implied many of our other constitutional liberations. He was almost the father, and was certainly the most persevering champion, of this cause. But, indeed, his whole life, devoted as it was to the promotion of every scheme calculated to diffuse knowledge, and to advance liberty in every region of the world, was applied with especial zeal and steadiness to the elevation of his native country. In all his patriotism he was encouraged by his amiable and high-minded wife; of whom Lord Brougham says, most justly, “with the utmost purity of life that can dignify and enhance female charms, she combined the inflexible principles and deep political feeling of a Hutchinson and a Roland.” He was a sound lawyer, and in very respectable practice. It was a great pleasure to Jeffrey to discuss questions of political benevolence with him, even in the extremity of his age; sometimes taking the wrong side in order to excite him, and always delighted with the undecaying spirit of the honest and liberal old man.

The other was the Honourable Henry Erskine, who had long been the brightest luminary at our bar. His name can no sooner be mentioned than it suggests ideas of wit, with which, in many memories, the recollection of him is chiefly associated. A tall and rather slender figure, a face sparkling with vivacity, a clear sweet voice, and a general suffusion of elegance, gave him a striking and pleasing appearance. He was nearly the same in private as in public; the presence of only a few friends never diminishing his animation, nor that of the largest audience his naturalness. No boisterousness ever vulgarised, no effort ever encumbered, his aerial gaiety. Though imposing no restraint upon himself, but always yielding freely to the radiant

spirit within him, his humour was rendered delightful by its gentleness and safety. Too good-natured for sarcasm, when he was compelled to expose, there was such an obvious absence of all desire to give pain, that the very person against whom his laughing darts were directed, generally thought the wounds compensated by the mirth and by the humanity of the cuts. Yet those will form a very erroneous conception of him who shall suppose that the mere display of wit was his principal object. In society, of course, his pleasure was to please his friends. But in public he scarcely ever uttered a joke merely for the sake of the laugh. He was far above this seducing vulgarity. His playfulness was always an argumentative instrument. He reasoned in wit; and, untempted by the bad taste and the weakness of desiring to prolong it for its own sake, it ceased the very instant that the reasoning was served. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the fascination it threw around him, he had better have been without the power. It allured him into a sphere below that to which his better faculties would have raised him, and established obstructing associations of cheerfulness, whenever he appeared, in the public mind. For he was intuitively quick in apprehension, and not merely a skilful, but a sound reasoner; —most sagacious in judgment; and his speaking had all the charms that these qualities, united to a copious but impressive language, and to a manner of the most polished and high-born gracefulness, could confer. Hence, though naturally, perhaps, his intellect was rather rapid and acute than deep or forcible, he could discharge himself of all his lightness when necessary, and could lead an audience, in the true tone, and with assured success, through a grave or distressing discussion.

In his profession he was the very foremost. There were some, particularly Blair, afterward the head of the court, who surpassed him in deep and exact legal knowledge. But no rival approached him in the variety, extent, or

brilliancy of his general practice. Others were skilled in one department, or in one court. But wherever there was a litigant, civil, criminal, fiscal, or ecclesiastic, there was a desire for Harry Erskine;—despair if he was lost,—confidence if he was secured. And this state of universal requisition had lasted so long, that it could only have proceeded from the public conviction of his general superiority. He had been Lord Advocate during the coalition administration, but not long enough to enlarge his public views; and when Jeffrey was first honoured by his notice, his brethren had, for eight successive years, chosen him for their Dean, or official head. His political opinions were those of the Whigs; but a conspicuous and inflexible adherence to their creed was combined with so much personal gentleness, that it scarcely impaired his popularity. Even the old judges, in spite of their abhorrence of his party, smiled upon him; and the eyes of such juries as we then had, in the management of which he was agreeably despotic, brightened as he entered. He was the only one of the marked Edinburgh Whigs who was not received coldly in the private society of their opponents. Nothing was so sour as not to be sweetened by the glance, the voice, the gaiety, the beauty, of Henry Erskine. He and his illustrious brother, Lord Erskine, have sometimes been compared. There is every reason for believing that, in genius, Thomas was the superior creature. But no comparison of two men so differently placed is of any value. It is scarcely possible even to conjecture what each might have been in the other's situation. All that is certain is, that each was admirable in his own sphere. Cast as his lot was, our Erskine shone in it to the utmost; and it is no deduction from his merits that no permanent public victories, and little of the greatness that achieves them, are connected with his name. He deserves our reverence for every virtue and every talent that could be reared in his position;—by private worth and unsullied public honour,

—by delightful temper, safe vivacity, and unmatched professional splendour.

Yet, on the 12th of January, 1796, this man was deprived of his deanship on account of his political principles, or, at least, in consequence of his having acted upon them to the extent of presiding at a public meeting to petition against the war. This dismissal was perfectly natural at a time when all intemperance was natural. But it was the Faculty of Advocates alone that suffered. Erskine had long honoured his brethren by his character and reputation, and certainly he lost nothing by being removed from the official chair. It is to the honour of the society, however, that out of 161 who voted, there were 38 who stood true to justice, even in the midst of such a scene. Jeffrey was not one of the thirty-eight. There were three or four young men who agreed with Erskine, and who adhered prominently to the policy of his party ever afterward, but who felt constrained not to shock the prejudices of relations, and therefore staid away. Jeffrey was one of these. He respected the feelings of his father, and of his first patron, Lord Glenlee. He never repented of the filial deference, but most bitterly did he ever afterward lament its necessity. He envied the thirty-eight, and always thought less of himself from his not having been one of them. It made the greater impression upon him that this was the first public occasion on which he had had an opportunity of acting on his principles.

Neither these matters, nor any other distraction, withdrew Jeffrey from his literary exercises. One of the two surviving books of the Argonauticon is dated Edinburgh, 12th December, 1795, and the other, Edinburgh, 4th July, 1796. And there is a letter to him from Dr. Maton, dated Salisbury, 13th September, 1796, from which it appears that he had a serious desire for some immediate publication. The book is not named; but it may be inferred from the Doctor's words that it was a classical

translation. “As matters are, I might as well tell you at once, that these great men, the booksellers, were not more sanguine about the good reception, or, I should rather say, the good incubation and sale of a work like yours, than they were about mine, when I had an idea of making it merely for the naturalists. Your favourite author seldom falls into the hands of any but professed amateurs of the classics, who are comparatively few at present, and one of the Bibliopoles told me that there was a *decent* translation already by—I know not by whom. As I was only a week, or a little more, in London, I could not take the charge of a part of your manuscript for their perusal. Why should you not try the consequence of publishing a part only? I mean, to see how it would sell. Of its obtaining a good name from the critics, I would not for a moment entertain a doubt.” No part of it ever appeared, however.

His eldest sister, Mary, was married on the 21st of April, 1797, to the late Mr. George Napier, writer to the Signet, Edinburgh.

His condition and feelings about this period, and for a few years later, transpire in some passages of his letters to his brother and Morehead.

“When I wrote you last I was in the distraction of passing my last public trials, and in the course of a fortnight afterward I had accomplished the whole ceremony, and was regularly admitted to the bar. The Christmas vacation put a stop to my splendid career, within a few days after it had begun; so that I have the course in a manner to renew, and the awkwardness of a first appearance to experience for a second time. The causes in which a young lawyer is engaged, are, as you probably know, for the most part of very little consequence; and the style of pleading at the outer bar* such as may be attained without much knowledge, eloquence, or presence of mind. It is literally

* One of the Bars in the Outer House, where a single judge sits.

a burst of wrangling and contradicting ; in which the loudest speaker has the greatest chance to prevail. I did not feel myself very expert in this trade, but perceive that I shall be able to acquire les manières of it without much difficulty.”—(To his brother, 3d January, 1795.)

“I have been considering very seriously, since I came last here, the probability of my success at the bar, and have but little comfort in the prospect ; for all the employment which I have, has come entirely through my father, or those with whom I am otherwise connected. I have also been trying to consider of some other occupation in which I might put my time and application to better profit ; but find the prospect still more perplexing and obscure. I am determined, however, that I will not linger away the years of my youth and activity in an unprofitable and hopeless hanging on about our courts, as I see not a few doing every day ; for besides the waste of that time which can never be replaced, the mind becomes at once humiliated and enfeebled in such a situation, and loses all that energy which alone can lead it to enterprise and success.”—(To his brother, 28th November, 1795.)

“All great passions are born in solitude. They are tamed and degraded by the common intercourse of society ; but in public companies, in crowds, and assemblies, they are quite lost and extinguished ; and so by degrees I come back to seriousness and sense. I wish I could make you as happy as your letter made me, and in the same way—I mean by as prosperous an account of my affairs : but the truth is not so bad as to be concealed. I have been here almost ever since the date of my last, lingering away my mornings in the court with less edification, less profit, and less patience, I think, than when you were here. My evenings, too, have not made up for the waste of time so well as they did last winter ; for though not so dissipated as you, I have been very much out for the last month. However, I weary of this idle, turbulent sort of amusement, and

mean to withdraw myself into solitude for another month to balance my accounts. The only kind of work with which I have employed myself lately is in translating old Greek poetry, and copying the style of all our different poets; but the weightier matters of the law have been horribly neglected.”—(27th January, 1796.)

“The last session has passed away with very little increase of profit, reputation, or expectancy; and though almost as favourable as candidates of my standing usually find it, has left me with no longing for the approach of another, and little prospect of better ruminations at the close of it. I wish I could do something which would ensure me some kind of subsistence from my own exertions. But to be in the condition of one who is asking charity, willing and waiting to work, but idle from want of employment, is an evil attending all the professions called liberal, and makes them unfortunately less independent than any other. The state of politics, too, in this country, and the excessive violence and avowed animosity of the parties in power, which have now extended to every department of life, and come to affect every profession, make the prospect still less encouraging to one who abhors intolerance, and is at no pains to conceal his contempt of its insolence.”—(2d April, 1796.)

“I am extremely hurried at present preparing for a criminal trial, in which I have been engaged very much against my inclination. The man for whom I attended last week, was found guilty unanimously; and indeed there was no chance for him. As to my new clients,—it is probable I shall have nothing to do but to sit by them, and look wise.”—(16th October, 1796.)

This man was Roderick Milesius M’Cuillin, who on the 13th of October, 1797, was convicted of forgery. His case, which, from the commission of the crime down to his death on the scaffold, was, throughout all its stages, accompanied by striking adventures, made a great noise at the time. It is impressed on my memory by the circum-

stance, that I happened to go into the gallery of the court, and saw, for the first time, Francis Jeffrey and George Joseph Bell, who were counsel for the prisoner, and Lord Braxfield, then the head of the criminal court. I understood nothing about such matters then, but I remember being much surprised at the style of the counsel, and at the vulgar overbearing coarseness of the judge.

“I should like, therefore, to be the rival of Smith and Hume, and there are some moments, (after I have been extravagantly praised, especially by those to whose censure I am more familiar,) when I fancy it possible that I shall one day arrive at such a distinction. But I could never convince myself that it was any part of my duty, or at all likely to increase the probability of this lofty distinction, for me to fix my hopes or my wishes upon it with an undeviating and unmoveable firmness. I do not think we can make occasions always for the display of our abilities, and if we do not unfit ourselves for making use of them when they do come, I think the less we feel at their delay, the happier we are at liberty to be.”—(To Morehead, 15th January, 1798.)

In another letter to Robert Morehead, of 6th August, 1798, he announces an intended ramble through Cumberland and Wales, and laments that they are both getting too hard and sensible. “What, my dear Bobby, are we turning into? I grow, it appears to myself, dismally stupid and inactive; I lose all my originalities, and ecstacies, and romances, and am far advanced already upon that dirty highway called the way of the world. I have a kind of unmeaning gaiety that is fatiguing and unsatisfactory even to myself; and in the brilliancy of this sarcastic humour, I can ridicule my former dispositions with admirable success. Yet I regret the loss of them much more feelingly, and really begin to suspect that the reason and gross common sense by which I now profess to estimate every thing, is just as much a vanity and delusion as any of the fanta-

sies it judges of. This, at least, I am sure of, that these poetic visions bestowed a much purer and more tranquil happiness than can be found in any of the tumultuous and pedantic triumphs that seem now within my reach, and that I was more amiable, and quite as respectable before this change took place in my character. I shall never arrive at any eminence either in this new character, and have glimpses and retrospective snatches of my former self, so frequent and so lively, that I shall never be wholly estranged from it, nor more than half the thing I seem to be aiming at. Within these few days I have been more perfectly restored to my poesies and sentimentalities than I had been for many months before. I walk out every day alone, and as I wander by the sunny sea, or over the green and solitary rocks of Arthur's Seat, I feel as if I had escaped from the scenes of impertinence in which I had been compelled to act, and recollect, with some degree of my old enthusiasm, the wild walks and eager conversation we used to take together at Herbertshire about four years ago. I am still capable, I feel, of going back to these feelings, and would seek my happiness, I think, in their indulgence, if my circumstances would let me. As it is, I believe I shall go on sophisticating and perverting myself till I become absolutely good for nothing."

He wrote again after the journey had begun, from Wigton, 3d September, 1798, saying he meant to take London on some part of his way. "I am going to be very literary in London, and have thoughts of settling there as a grub. Will you go into partnership with me? I have introductions to review and newspaper editors, and I am almost certain that I could make four times the sum that ever I shall do at the bar. Your friends were all well when I heard of them. John is now asleep before me, and Dr. Brown as near him as possible."—"P. S.—I send you a most exquisite sonnet, with which I was inspired immediately upon my arrival, and which I wish you to circulate

among your friends, as a production of the ingenious person whose name it bears. My reason for this is, that he may make his entrée into Oxford with some of that eclat which it cannot fail to procure him," &c. &c.

His grub speculation got little encouragement. On the 20th of the same month he tells Mr. Geo. Bell, "I have derived but little benefit yet from my letters of introduction. Perry* I can never find at home. Philips† sent me away without reading my letter, and most of the other eminent persons to whom I meant to present myself, are enjoying their dignity in the country."

So much the better for him. He came home, and was gradually drawn by circumstances into the line of life which was the best for his powers, his usefulness, and his happiness.

"I have been idle and rather dissipated all this summer. Of late I have had fits of discontent and self-condemnation pretty severely; but I doubt if this will produce any thing for a long time to come. The thing, however, will certainly draw to a crisis in a year or two. My ambition, and my prudence, and indolence will have a pitched battle, and I shall either devote myself to contention and toil, or lay myself quietly down in obscurity and mediocrity of attainment. I am not sure which of these will promote my happiness the most. I shall regret what I have forfeited, be my decision what it may. The unaspiring life, I believe, has the least positive wretchedness. I have often thought of going to India, but I do not know for what station I should be qualified, or could qualify myself, and I have almost as little talent for solicitation as you have."—(To Morehead, 6th July, 1800.)

These seeming adversities, and this obvious ambition, always led him back to himself, and to the improvement of his own mind. He never gave up his studies, or had any real hope of success except from his deserving it. In

* Editor of the Morning Chronicle.

† Bookseller.

none of his letters is there the slightest gleam of expectation from any patron.

He was fond of all science not depending on mathematics. Medicine in particular had great attractions for him, and for a short time he studied it. His friends John Allen, John Thomson, Charles Bell, and Thomas Brown, were all of that profession, and though they did not purposely encourage his propensity, their conversation produced a desultory acquaintance with their science. One way or other, he at least learned enough about it to make him generally a fanciful sufferer and a speculative doctor, when he himself was the patient. Chemistry he liked, and, in its large principles, understood respectably. All his scientific tendencies were excited by his being a member of that singular society of the rising young men then in Edinburgh, called "The Academy of Physics."* "I am become a zealous chemist, and would make experiments if I could afford it, and was not afraid of my eyes. I shall join a society in the winter, that conducts these things in a very respectable style. I am afraid it will swallow up our academy, for which I am sorry. It was the most select and the least burdensome thing of the kind I was ever concerned with. But amiable licentiousness and want of discipline have extinguished it, or nearly."—(To Morehead, 6th July, 1800.) This general acquaintance with science was of great use to him in his profession. And though his science, as science, was neither deep nor accurate, it was sufficient to set him, in this respect, above the judges or the juries he might have to convince, or any brother he

* See a full account of it in Welsh's Life of Brown. They acknowledged only three facts which were to be admitted without proof:—1. Mind exists. 2. Matter exists. 3. Every change indicates a cause. And even these concessions they reserved "the power of altering or modifying." Prof. Brown, John Leyden, Lord Webb Seymore, Mr. Reddie, Dr. Birkbeck, Brougham, Jeffrey, Horner, were members, and many others of note.

might have to oppose; nor, except Lord Brougham, was there any practising barrister, even in England, who in this particular was his match.

On the 2d of March, 1800, he tells his brother, “I am beginning to grow discontented, and to feel emotions of despondency and ambition, that do no credit to my philosophy. It is impossible not to see that my profession does not afford me the means of subsistence, and that nine parts in ten of the little employment I have are derived from those with whom I am personally connected. If these persons were to die, or to quarrel with me, I should scarcely have an apology for attending the courts, and should make less by doing so than a common labourer. Now this is not only mortifying, but a little alarming too, and prudence as well as pride exhorts me to look to something else. I have talents that my conscience will not let me rank in the lowest order, and I had industry enough too for most things, till the loitering habits of my nominal profession, and the peculiar state of my health, put an end to any regular exertion. I have associated, too, a great deal of late with men of high rank, prospects, and pretensions, and feel myself quite upon a level with them, in every thing intrinsic and material. I cannot help looking upon a slow, obscure, and philosophical starvation at the Scotch bar as a destiny not to be submitted to. There are some moments when I think I could sell myself to the minister or to the Devil, in order to get above these necessities. At other times I think of undertaking pilgrimages and seeking adventures, to give a little interest and diversity to the dull life that seems to await me ; and when I am most reasonable, I meditate upon my chances of success at the English bar, or in India, to both of which resources I have been exhorted and recommended by some of my friends. What does your commercial, idle, epicurean head say to all this ?”

If these fits of depression or impatience had been serious,

and had arisen merely from his not getting business, they would have been very unreasonable. He had only been five years at the law, and had got at least something to do, though not much; whereas, he must have seen that many a better lawyer had been double that time without knowing what a fee was, and yet had risen to fortune and renown. But when men write about their own feelings to a distant friend, they are apt to get sentimental, and to describe emotions as habitual which are only suggested by the act of writing. This was the close, too, of the winter session of the court, which, by reminding him how little he had done, naturally disposed him to pensiveness and complaint. Accordingly, he says in this very letter, "You must not think that these reflections are habitual with me. They come in fits, though, to say the truth, rather oftener than I could wish. This is the last week of our session." It was not his professional insignificance alone that troubled him, but its being combined with the consciousness of adequate ability, and the rise of very inferior rivals on the right side, who were flaming over his head like rockets. Notwithstanding all this, however, his prevailing state, as at every period of his life, when not in actual distress, was that of gaiety.

Accordingly, although his professional despondency lasted several years longer, his feeling of personal loneliness was now entirely removed. The Speculative Society, time, the bar, and his being better known, had led him into a wider society, and into several valuable and permanent friendships. In particular, between 1797 and 1800, some conspicuous young men had come to Edinburgh, to whom, being strangers, the merits of Jeffrey were more apparent than they hitherto had been to many of those among whom he dwelt. Some of these have been already named in mentioning the Speculative Society, and it was to them that he refers in the preceding letter as "*men of high rank, prospects, and pretensions,*" with whom he had been asso-

ciating, and to whom he felt himself equal "*in every thing intrinsic and material.*" In addition to these were Lord Webb Seymore, Mr. Sidney Smith, and Mr. Hamilton, also strangers. The known admiration of these foreigners gave him importance in the sight of those who were disposed to slight him, and enlarged his experience in life. And his ordinary Edinburgh friendships now included Professor Playfair, Mr. Thomas Thomson, Mr. George Joseph Bell, and his brother Charles, Mr. James Graham, Mr. Brougham, Mr. John Macfarlane, Mr. John A. Murray, Mr. Horner, Mr. James Moncrieff, and Mr. John Richardson. His surviving friends cannot have forgotten his delight in the calm and amiable thoughtfulness of Playfair,—how he loved the gentle Seymore,—how he reverenced Horner,—how he enjoyed the wise wit of Smith.

Of all these there was no one, except perhaps his cousin Robert Morehead, to whom he was attached so early as to the two Bells, or to whom he adhered through life with a more affectionate tenacity. Both reached great distinction; one in the law, the other in art and physiology. George was long afterward appointed by the unanimous election of his brethren to the Professorship of Law in the College of Edinburgh, and by the Crown to one of the principal clerkships in the Supreme Court. But his true distinction consists in his being the author of the *Commentaries on the Law of Bankruptcy*, an institutional work of the very highest excellence, which has guided the judicial deliberations of his own country for nearly fifty years, and has had its value acknowledged in the strongest terms by no less jurists than Story and Kent. With a stiff and sometimes a hard manner, he was warm-hearted and honourable, a true friend, and excellent in all the relations of life. No one ever knew him well without respect and regard. Charles is now known to the world as the author of a beautiful work, illustrated by his own exquisite drawings, on the anatomy of painting, and as the discoverer of the

true structure and theory of our nervous system,—a discovery which places him at the head of modern physiologists. Gentle and affectionate, he was strongly marked by the happy simplicity that often accompanies talent; and was deeply beloved by numerous friends. In affection the brothers were one. George's labour at his book used to excite Jeffrey's envy and self-contempt. “In the mean time, what are you doing? and how do the days run away from you? Do you know, since I have seen you engaged in that great work of yours, and witnessed the confinement and perspiration it has occasioned you, I have oftener considered you as an object of envy and reproachful comparison than ever I did before? I am really a good-for-nothing fellow, I believe, and have no right to expect any better fortune in this world than I am likely to have. I have thought so oftener, I tell you, within these last two or three months than ever I did; and many a time when I have skipped down your stair with an air of exulting carelessness, I have wished myself hanged for a puppy, and you with me for putting me in mind of it. I have no leisure, however, to be moral at present, but as I do chew upon such reflections very perseveringly, something perhaps will one day come of it.”

They were left early in life very poor, on the death of their father, a clergyman in the Scotch Episcopal Church. As soon as they were of an age to reflect, they saw that they had nothing to depend upon except their own industry; and, having selected their departments, they entered upon their cultivation with an energy characteristic of both. There are few things more touching than the high-minded resolution with which these two young men, cheered by each other, prosecuted the severe studies out of which they at last achieved their reward. There is a memorandum by George in which, among other things, he mentions a walk that they took to Cults, twenty-two miles west of Edinburgh, where an aunt was living. Each had

with him a part of what was afterward converted into his first publication, on which, and on their uncertain prospects, they had much anxious talk. “I recollect we stopped to rest ourselves, and drank at a stream on the road side, and amused ourselves with thinking how pleasant it would be to remember this outset of life when we were advanced somewhat higher.”

George appears to have been among the first at the bar to discover Jeffrey’s superiority; and without the advice, remonstrances, and encouragement, of this steady and hard-working friend, it seems very possible that Jeffrey would not have persevered in his profession. Bell was always rating, and inspiring him with hope. Thus, in answer to an impatient letter from Jeffrey of the 7th of October, 1796, Bell, among other things, tells him (9th October 1796)—“Upon your own exertion must depend not your happiness alone—for perhaps you are too much of a philosopher to allow any thing external to influence your happiness—but your capacities of indulging in whims, and your ability of assisting others. If so, you will conceive better of your profession that you seem to do.” “With a strong, lively, and elegant imagination—a cultivated taste,—a mind well stored with knowledge,—versant in the law at least equal to any of your years,—with ready conceptions, and quickness of reply, what in all the world should hinder you from attaining to the head of your profession. Let me hear no more of this murmuring and nonsense.” “But, in faith, my dear fellow, if you feel really averse to this profession, and unable to bear its drudgery, you should at once resolve to make a man of yourself, and do honour to your family and your country, by some literary labour.” Throughout all that part of the life of every barrister that must be precarious, Bell was equally ready with encouraging sense, and never despaired of the final triumph of the friend it was given to. He alludes in another memorandum without date, but written some years after this, to M’Cuillin’s

case, thus:—"On coming to town I was appointed to be counsel for a fine young fellow of an Irishman charged with forgery. I made my friend Jeffrey my assistant. He was not then known. Few people but myself knew the extraordinary resources of that man's genius at the time. His manner was bad, and the misjudging world would allow him no merit or talent. The conquest he had made over the prejudices of the world, his own manner, and every man who has come into competition with him, none but talents of the first rank could have accomplished."

Besides Bell, there were two other very early friends, both of the same class, over whose memories it is grateful to linger.

James Grahame, author of the Sabbath, British Georgics, The Birds of Scotland, and other Poems, who died on the 14th September, 1811, was one of them. Tall, solemn, large featured, and very dark, he was not unlike one of the independent preachers of the commonwealth. He is styled "sepulchral Grahame" by Byron. Neither the bar, at which he practised a few years, nor Whig principles, in the promotion of which he was most ardent (but which with him meant only the general principles of liberty), were the right vocation of a pensive nature, whose delight was in religion and poetry. The decline of his health deepening his piety, and increasing his dislike of his profession, he entered the English Church, in 1808, and obtained an humble curacy, with which, however, he was perfectly contented. With the softest of human hearts, his indignation knew no bounds when it was roused by what he held to be oppression, especially of animals or the poor, both of whom he took under his special protection. He and a beggar seemed always to be old friends. The merit of his verse consists in its expressing the feelings of his own heart. It all breathes a quiet, musing benevolence, and a sympathy with the happiness of every living creature. Contention, whether at the bar or in the church, had no charms for one

to whom a Scotch tune was a pleasure for a winter evening, and who could pass whole summer days in cultivating the personal acquaintance of birds in their own haunts, and to whom nothing was a luxury that excluded the ethereal calm of indolence. Yet his virtue was by no means passive. He was roused into a new nature by abhorrence of cruelty, and could submit to any thing in the cause of duty. Professor Wilson published some lines on his death, which owe their charm, which is great, to their truly expressing the gentle kindness and simple piety of his departed friend. I do not know whether he or Jeffrey delighted most in each other. With Richardson, the three passed many a happy evening in their early years. What did any of them find better in life than one of their many humble suppers, with Jeffrey's talk, and Grahame's pathetic or jacobite songs, and Richardson's flute.

John Maefarlan, afterward of Kirkton, was also an advocate; never in great, but generally in very respectable practice. In piety, calmness, and Whiggism, he was the same with his friend Grahame; from whom he only differed, in being more practical, in spite of a taste for German and metaphysics. His life was extended till the 18th of December 1846, when he died at the age of eighty; his last twenty years having been passed in the country. He was one of Jeffrey's steady friends; one of those friends with whom friendship can subsist, and warmly, without the aid of constant intercourse. For in their walks they were a good deal different, Marfarlan being serious, studious, and retired. He had his own associates, and shrank from no publicity where he could do good, but cared little for general society. What Jeffrey, and all who knew him, liked him for, was, his kindness of heart, his honesty, his intelligence, his singular simplicity, and his political firmness. It need not be told that he and Grahame were two of the thirty-eight. He was one of the few (at least they are fewer than they should be) who could combine the

deepest personal religion with absolute toleration, and the boldest patronage of the people with the steadiest repression of their extravagance. He never published except in his old age, when he put out a few occasional sheets against prevailing follies, written with almost apostolic shortness and fervour. His words were as plain as Swift's; his thoughts, within his range, as liberal as Fenelon's. In 1834 I sent one of his little pamphlets against strikes and unions to Jeffrey, who answered, "John Macfarlan's printed letter to the (calico) printers is admirable. I have sent it to the Chancellor and Lord Grey. He is a man to be proud of."—(18th February, 1834.)

In February, 1799, Jeffrey wrote "an Analysis, &c., of the general remarks on the customs and manners of the native inhabitants of New South Wales, annexed to the account of that colony, by David Collins, Esq. London, 4to, 1798." The style of this paper shows that it was meant for publication, probably in the *Monthly Review*, to which he was then an occasional contributor. It seems to be an examination of the first part of Collins's work, of which the second volume was afterward discussed in the *Edinburgh Review* (v. ii. p. 30). The analysis is excellent.

His reading, or part of it, during 1800, is attested by a bound volume of 150 very closely written quarto pages, beginning in January and ending in December. It contains short critical discussions of forty-eight books which he had been studying, almost all of them on the most important and difficult subjects. He was at the pains to make a regular alphabetical index to the volume; a thing unexampled with him, and which could only be done from his idea of the value of the notes and speculations it contains. It is full of talent, and with, I suspect, considerable originality.

During this summer (1800) he also attended a course of chemical lectures by Dr. Hope, of which there remain five volumes of notes.

On the 7th of June, 1800, his youngest sister was married to Dr. Brown, now of Langfyne. This was a union from which he drew much happiness throughout his whole subsequent life. He greatly loved his sister, and was cordially attached to her excellent husband, who was steadily rising to the eminence he afterward attained as the first physician in Glasgow, and always dignified his practice by the cultivation of other sciences. No alliance could have been happier for all parties.

During the autumn of this year, he and his friend Sanscrit Hamilton planned an expedition to Germany. "We propose to make a philosophical tour into the southern parts of the empire, observing men, women, and minerals, and journeying with the simple economy of the sages and apostles of old." But it was soon found that even this apostolic pilgrimage would require a hundred guineas, and "I have not twenty in the world."—(To John, 17th June, 1800.)

Mrs. Brown's removal left his father and him alone. It was impossible that this could last long. Accordingly, before the first two months were out, he was obviously thinking of a home for himself, with a companion of his own choosing. "For my part, I have been doing nothing for this last month with all my might, and with all my soul. Indeed, I have been enjoying my idleness so diligently, that I have scarcely had resolution to encounter the fatigues of going from home. I had myself transported indeed by water to St. Andrews, where I bathed, and lounged, and fell in love with great assiduity. The love indeed sticks by me still, and I shall go back, I believe, and let it have its course."—(To John, 3d August, 1800.)

The German tour shrunk into a Highland one, which I suppose exhausted the twenty guineas, and this revived an old scheme. "I have been so long exhorted by all my friends to write a book, that I have a great notion that I shall attempt something of that kind in the course of the winter. I have not been able to fix upon any subject yet

though, and I am afraid a man is not very likely to make a good figure who writes, not because he has something to say, but who casts about for something to say, because he is determined to write. A law book would probably be of the greatest service to me, but I have neither science nor patience enough, I suspect, to acquire it.”—(To John, 1st October, 1800.)

The book never appeared; and he was again disturbed by the old fancies about England and India. “I have thought, too, of engaging myself in the study of Oriental literature, and making myself considerable in that way, and of fifty different schemes of literary eminence at home.” But he adds,—“Within this while, however, I will confess to you, these ambitious fancies have lost a good deal of their power over my imagination, and I have accustomed myself to the contemplation of a humble and more serene sort of felicity. To tell you all in two words, I have serious thoughts of marriage, which I should be forced to abandon if I were to adopt almost any of the plans I have hinted at. The poor girl, however, has no more fortune than me, and it would be madness nearly to exchange our empty hands under the present aspect of the constellations.”—(To John, 3d January, 1801.)

The lady whose affections he had thus the happiness to engage was Catharine, one of the daughters of the Reverend Dr. Wilson, Professor of Church History at St. Andrews, a second cousin of his own.

In March this year (1801) there was a vacancy in the historical chair in the University of Edinburgh, by the resignation of Alexander Fraser Tytler, Esq., who had occupied it for several years with credit to himself and to the College. The office was in the gift of the Faculty of Advocates. Some of Jeffrey’s friends advised him to take it, if he could get it; and he himself was by no means averse. His subsequent career renders it certain that he would have made it a splendid course. But if he had ap-

plied, it does not admit of a doubt that party spirit would have rejected him. And there were other and wiser friends who were against his undertaking any thing that tended to withdraw him from his profession. The tortures of uncertainty were not allowed to be long endured, either by intending candidates, or by the electors. The father resigned on the 11th of March, and his son was appointed on the 18th of that month.

The marriage took place on the 1st November, 1801. It had all the recommendations of poverty. His father, who was in humble circumstances, assisted them a very little; but Miss Wilson had no fortune, and Jeffrey had told his brother, only six months before, that "*my profession has never yet brought me £100 a-year.* Yet have I determined to venture upon this new state. It shews a reliance on Providence scarcely to be equalled in this degenerate age, and indicates such resolutions of economy as would terrify any less magnanimous adventurer." His brother having asked him to describe his wife; he did so, as I think, who came to know her well, with great accuracy. "You ask me to describe my Catherine to you; but I have no talent for description, and put but little faith in full drawn characters; besides, the original is now so much a part of myself, that it would not be decent to enlarge very much, either upon her excellences or her imperfections. It is proper, however, to tell you, in sober earnest, that she is not a showy or remarkable girl, either in person or character. She has good sense, good manners, good temper, and good hands; and above all, I am perfectly sure that she has a good heart, and that it is mine without reluctance or division." She soon secured the respect and esteem of all his friends, and made her house, and its society, very agreeable.

Their first home was in Buccleuch Place, one of the new parts of the old town; not in either the eighth or the ninth stories, neither of which ever existed, but in the third

story, of what is now No. 18 of the street. His domestic arrangements were set about with that honourable economy which always enabled him to practise great generosity. There is a sheet of paper containing an inventory, in his own writing, of every article of furniture that he went the length of getting, with the prices. His own study was only made comfortable at the cost of £7 18s. ; the banqueting hall rose to £13 8s., and the drawing-room actually amounted to £22 19s.

During part of next winter, (1800 and 1801,) he attended the second course of lectures delivered by Dugald Stewart on Political Economy, of which he has left five small volumes of notes. It was there that I first got acquainted with him. I had seen him before in the court, and had both seen and heard him in the Speculative Society, and must have occasionally spoken to him. But it was at this class that I began to know him. Our ways home were the same, and we always walked together. I remember being struck with his manner, and delighted by his vivacity and kindness. From that time we were never for a moment estranged.

In May, 1802, he took up his second abode in the upper story of what is now, as it was then, No. 62 Queen Street. It brought him nearer his friends, and gave him a beautiful prospect.

His first professional speech that I remember was made that month in the General Assembly. It was in a cause which, however important to the parties and the church courts, was in itself paltry. But it made a little noise in its hour, chiefly from Jeffrey's appearance in it. "My professional employment is increasing, too, a little, I think, and I rather believe that my reputation as a man of business stands somewhat higher than it used to do. I have made a speech in the General Assembly about six weeks ago that has done me some good, I believe. The speech seemed to me at the time to be very middling, and certain-

ly cost me no exertion whatsoever ; but I find it spoken of in many quarters, and have received congratulations from my friends as if it was to make me very advantageously known."—(To John, 26th June, 1802.)

There were no regular reporters of the decisions of the court at this period, except two advocates, who held the performance of that task as an office, to which they were elected by their brethren. They were paid by a small salary, which arose from the sale of the annual volume. It was always conferred on juniors ; and, as by an absurd deference of the reporters, and an incomprehensible aversion on the bench, the opinions of the judges were scarcely ever given, it was neither so difficult nor so important a task as it has since become. In the summer of 1801 both collectorships were vacant. Jeffrey presented himself to his brethren as a candidate for one of them, and had the honour of being proposed by Henry Erskine. But upon the 10th of July he was rejected by a large majority. His two opponents were younger than him, and, however excellent and fit for the place, certainly had not his reputation. But qualification had little to do with the matter. It was made a mere party question.

The election was connected with one painful occurrence, which distressed him for many years. There was some business relation between his father and Sir William Miller, Bart., who was a judge, and known, from his estate's name, as Lord Glenlee. This had led his lordship to notice Frank Jeffrey while very young, and, seeing his talents, to have him a good deal about him. But as the youth grew up, and his political principles began to disclose themselves, his lordship's taste for him did not increase, and their intercourse became less frequent. Glenlee had no vote in the election, but it was thought that he might have some influence, and as there was no avowed rupture, Jeffrey asked him to exert it on his behalf. But his lordship took this occasion to tell him plainly that, in consequence of his politics,

he could befriend him no more. They parted, and scarcely exchanged words for nearly thirty years. Jeffrey was Lord Advocate before he was allowed to renew the old acquaintance. He did so then, and with great pleasure; for throughout this long alienation he had never uttered one word about his early patron but in respect and gratitude. So far as I know, this was the solitary eclipse by which any friendship of Jeffrey's was ever obscured.

He regretted it the more from his great admiration of Glenlee, who was a very able and a very singular man. After a short course of early travel, and an abortive attempt in parliament, he settled at the bar, and devoted the rest of his long life entirely to study. He was made a judge when still young, and after so little practice that he had to learn his law on the bench. Talent and industry, however, soon placed him high among profound and learned lawyers. But though deep in legal knowledge, and most ingenious in its application, law was not the highest of his spheres. His favourite and most successful pursuit was mathematics; on which John Playfair, a very competent judge, used to say that he had original speculations, which, if given to the world, would have raised him to an eminent place among the best modern contributors to that science. Next to this was his classical learning, which gradually extended to a general, but pretty accurate, acquaintance with the languages and literature of France, Spain, and Italy, and, in his extreme old age, of Germany. There is not much that could be added to the attainments of a man who was great in mathematics, literature, and jurisprudence.

His conversation, as described by the two or three friends who were his world, was full of thought and curious original views; and it was this that chiefly attracted Jeffrey. A lover of knowledge for its own sake, and with a memory tenacious of the substance of truth, he not only systematically augmented his learning, but continued the improve-

ment even of his faculties, when far beyond the period of life at which the mental powers begin, or are generally permitted to decline. Jeffrey visited him at his country-seat in August, 1842, when he was eighty-seven, and wrote to a friend that “He is very deaf and walks feebly, but his mind is as entire and vigorous as ever. When I came in he was in the middle of a great new treatise on the properties of the Ellipse, which he had just got from Germany.” His public feelings were miserably narrow. Indeed, on political matters his mind never made any progress, except perhaps in being easier under its illiberality, since he withdrew into his learned cell. Too fastidious and too comfortable for publication, he neither gave nor (so far as it appears) left any thing to the world. And thus he has gone without rearing any memorial to himself, except the inadequate one that is furnished by the law reports; and even in giving judicial opinions, depth, brevity, and an odd delivery, made his excellences less perceptible than those of far inferior men.

His appearance was striking, and very expressive of his intellect and habits. The figure was slender; the countenance pale, but with a full, dark eye; the features regular, unless when disturbed, as his whole frame often was, by little jerks and gesticulations, as if he was under frequent galvanism; his air and manner polite. Every thing indicated the philosophical and abstracted gentleman. And another thing which added to his peculiarity was, that he never used an English word when a Scotch one could be got. He died in 1846, in his ninety-first year.

Whatever this rejection proved to the party from which it proceeded, it was to Jeffrey personally a most fortunate occurrence. It has been supposed, that if he had been allowed to waste himself in the obscure labour of reporting, the Edinburgh Review might never have been heard of. There is little probability in this opinion; but undoubtedly a very slight measure of professional employment would have

prevented him from having much connection with it. This exclusion increased his despair of success in the law, and co-operated with his literary ambition in leading him into the scheme and management of that great work, with which his name is now permanently associated, which for the next twenty-seven years became the principal business of his life.

Mr. Smith's account of the origin of the Edinburgh Review is this:—"One day we happened to meet in the eighth or ninth story, or flat, in Buccleuch Place, the elevated residence of the then Mr. Jeffrey. I proposed that we should set up a Review; this was acceded to with acclamation. I was appointed editor, and remained long enough in Edinburgh to edit the first number of the Edinburgh Review."—(Preface to Smith's Works.)

The merit of having first suggested the work is undoubtedly due to Mr. Smith. He himself claims it in the preceding words, and to those acquainted with his character this is sufficient. But Jeffrey admits it. His "*Contributions*" are dedicated to Mr. Smith, expressly as "*The Original Projector of the Edinburgh Review*." And no other person has ever come forward to dispute the fact. Whatever credit, therefore, attaches to the first announced idea of the undertaking, it belongs to Mr. Smith. But his statement might make it appear that the resolution to begin it was sudden and accidental, and as if it had occurred and been acted upon at once at that casual meeting. But probably all that is meant is, that it was then that the matter was brought to a practical conclusion. Because it is difficult to believe that such an undertaking could have been determined upon, on the suggestion of a moment, and without previous calculation and arrangement. Accordingly, Jeffrey never ascribed more to this meeting than that it was there that they had their "*first serious consultations about it*." It happened to be a tempestuous evening, and I have heard him say that they had some merriment at the greater storm they were

about to raise. There were circumstances that tended so directly toward the production of some such work, that it seems now as if its appearance in Edinburgh, and about this time, might almost have been foreseen. Of these it is sufficient to mention the irrepressible passion for discussion which succeeded the fall of old systems on the French Revolution ; the strong feeling of resentment at our own party intolerance ; the obviousness that it was only through the press that this intolerance could be abated, or our policy reformed ; the dotage of all the existing journals ; and the presence, in this place, of the able young men who have been mentioned, most of them in close alliance, and to whom concealed authorship was an irresistible vent.

The most important of these were Jeffrey, Smith, Brougham, and Horner. Very few of them contemplated letters or politics as the business of their lives, but they were all eager for distinction, and for the dissemination of what they, in their various walks, thought important truth ; and they were then all masters of their own time.* A review combined all the recommendations that could tempt such persons into print. Of all the forms of addressing the public, it is the one which presents the strongest allurements to those who long for the honours, without the hazards, of authorship. It invites every variety of intellect ; it does not chain its contributors to long courses of labour ; it binds no one to do more than he pleases ; it shrouds each in the anonymous mystery, which each is so apt to derive a second gratification by removing ; it exalts each into an invisible chair of public censorship, and pleases his self-importance or his love of safety, by showing him, unseen, the effect of his periodical lightning. A publication that

* Their youth, though it was one of the established grounds of the pretended contempt of their opponents, was by no means excessive. Allen, in 1802, was thirty-two, Smith thirty-one, Jeffrey twenty-nine, Brown twenty-four, Horner twenty-four, Brougham twenty-three. Excellent ages for such work.

subsists by successions of temporary excitement is not always favourable to habits of patient inquiry, or accurate and temperate statement. But this is only when it falls into rash or unconscientious hands. Honesty and prudence have often produced as dispassionate and well-considered discussions in reviews, as any that could be slowly elaborated by a responsible name in an acknowledged volume. But, at any rate, how strong were the seductions of brilliancy, ridicule, or severity, to a knot of friends, whose pleasure in the exercise of their powers was not likely to be checked either by reflecting on its effects upon themselves, or by too much sympathy with the victims of their critical vigour.

If the rest who first planned this work had been left to their own inexperience, they would probably have been at a loss how to proceed. But they plainly leant upon Jeffrey, who had not merely been engaged in the study of criticism all his life, but had reduced his study to practice. He had already got several papers published in the existing journals. Some of them, though not specified, are alluded to in his letters, but (so far as I know) only three of them can be authenticated. Two of them are on Whiter's *Ety-mologicon Magnum*, which were published in June and July, 1802, in the *Monthly Review*. He describes these in a letter to his brother, (1st August, 1802,) as "*too elaborate, but quite sound in argument.*" The third was a discussion of *Thalaba*, which he sent to that journal before the *Edinburgh Review* was resolved upon, though by some accident it was not published there till November, which was subsequent to the appearance of his article on *Thalaba* in the *Edinburgh*. His having written these papers was known to his friends, who, though he was not at first their formal editor, leant mainly on his experience and wisdom.

And the field was open to their conquest. There had been no critical journal in Scotland since the days of the original "*Edinburgh Review*," the first number of which

was published in January, 1755, and the second and last in January, 1756.*

There were reviews in England ; but, though respectable according to the notions at that time of critical respectability, they merely languished in decent feebleness. Indeed, the circumstance of their almost restricting themselves to the examination of books, exclusively of public measures and principles, narrowed the range of their criticism, and congealed its spirit.

It was intended to have published the first number in June, 1802, but it was put off for some months. During this pause, Jeffrey's expectations of its success, if a few passages in his letters can be relied on, were not high. "Our Review has been postponed till September, and I am afraid will not go on with much spirit even then. Perhaps we have omitted the tide that was in our favour. We are bound for a year to the booksellers, and shall drag through that, I suppose, for our own indemnification." —(To Mr. Morehead, 24th May, 1802.)

"Our Review is still at a stand. However, I have completely abandoned the idea of taking any permanent share in it, and shall probably desert after fulfilling my engage-

* This first Edinburgh Review contains a slight article by Adam Smith on Johnson's Dictionary, and an excellent letter, ascribed to Smith, on the inexpediency of confining the journal to Scotch publications. The conductors, in that innocent age of reviewing, profess to be guided by principles which must please some of those gentle spirits who used to be shocked by what they deemed the virulence of the new Edinburgh journal. "They are to judge with candour, but with freedom. Opinions they are only to relate, *not to combat*." "Inmoraliies they would rather choose to bury in oblivion." "They expect no praise to themselves, for a work in which to be useful is their only design," &c. It will gratify the modern reviewer to learn that their very first number contains this specimen of their tenderness:—"We are almost ashamed to say we have read this pamphlet. 'Tis such a low scurrilous libel, that even the most necessitous printer or publisher must be at a loss for finding a decent excuse for publishing it."

ments, which only extend to a certain contribution for the first four numbers. I suspect that the work itself will not have a much longer life. I believe we shall come out in October, and have no sort of doubt of making a respectable appearance, though we may not perhaps either obtain popularity, or deserve it.”—(To John, 26th June, 1802.)

Nobody who knew Jeffrey well, would have expected him to augur favourably of it, because favourable augury was rather rare with him. He calls himself “a Pessimist.” It is difficult to understand how this could be the habit of so cheerful a temperament, and so sound a judgment. Were it possible to suspect so sincere a person of making preparations against the imputation of foolish confidence by systematic professions of fear, it might be suspected that distrust of futurity was a defensive principle of his. But he was far too candid for any such scheme. He really believed that most grand projects fail; and therefore, having little sympathy with the sanguine, he had a pleasure in refuting their demonstrations, and provoked himself into doubt by the exercise of assailing their infallibilities. But whatever the explanation may be, the fact is, that in his calculation of human contingencies, he was generally in a state of lively argumentative despair. There was no cloud over the spirits. It was merely a taste that he had for extracting grounds, out of existing circumstances, for predicting failure rather than success:—“For my own part, I am much inclined to despair still, though I cannot help confessing that I am as gay and foolish through the twenty-four hours as I used to be.”—(To Horner, 23d July, 1803.) “I look enough at the bright side of things;—I mean habitually, and referably to my own little concerns;—so much so that it is really an effort for me to look at any thing else. But it is an effort which I start every now and then to think how I can decline so completely and *theoretically*. I am very much in a state of despair, while I have scarcely any actual anxiety.”—(To Malthus, 1st April, 1811.)

At last, on the 10th of October, 1802, the first number of the Edinburgh Review appeared. Besides several other articles, it contained seven by Smith, four by Horner, four commonly ascribed to Lord Brougham, and five by Jeffrey, one of which, upon Mourier on the influence of the French Revolution, began the work.

The effect was electrical. And instead of expiring, as many wished, in their first effort, the force of the shock was increased on each subsequent discharge. It is impossible for those who did not live at the time, and in the heart of the scene, to feel, or almost to understand the impression made by the new luminary, or the anxieties with which its motions were observed. It was an entire and instant change of every thing that the public had been accustomed to in that sort of composition. The old periodical opiates were extinguished at once. The learning of the new journal, its talent, its spirit, its writing, its independence, were all new; and the surprise was increased by a work so full of public life springing up, suddenly, in a remote part of the kingdom. Different classes soon settled into their different views of it. Its literature, its political economy, and its pure science were generally admired. Many thoughtful men, indifferent to party, but anxious for the progress of the human mind, and alarmed lest war and political confusion should restore a new course of dark ages, were cheered by the unexpected appearance of what seemed likely to prove a great depository for the contributions of able men to the cause of philosophy. Its political opinions made it be received by one party with demonstrations of its iniquity, with confident prophecies of the impossibility of so scandalous a publication lasting, much pretended derision, and boundless abuse of its audacious authors. On the opposite side, it was hailed as the dawn of a brighter day. It was not merely the intelligent championship of their principles that those on that side saw apparently secured, but the far higher end, that reason would be heard. The

splendid career of the journal, as it was actually run, was not anticipated, either by its authors or by its most ardent admirers; none of whom could foresee its long endurance, or the extent to which the mighty improvements that have reformed our opinions and institutions, and enabled us to engrave the wisdom of experience on the maintainable antiquities of our system, were to depend on this single publication. They only saw the present establishment of an organ of the highest order, for the able and fearless discussion of every matter worthy of being inquired into; but they could not then discern its consequences.

Nowhere was its pillar of fire watched with greater intensity than in Scotland, where the constitutional wilderness was the darkest. Many years had to pass before it could effect actual reform; but it became clearer every day that a generation was forming by which the seed sowing by this work must at last be reaped. To Edinburgh in particular it was of especial benefit. It extended the literary reputation of the place, and connected it with public affairs, and made its opinions important. All were the better of a journal to which every one with an object of due importance had access, which it was in vain either to bully or to despise, and of the fame of which even its reasonable haters were inwardly proud.

It was distinguished in its outset from similar publications by its being kept quite independent of booksellers, and by the high prices soon paid for articles. The first kept its managers free; the second gave them the command of nearly all the talent in the market. Yet for the first two or three numbers they had an idea, that such a work could be carried on without remunerating the writers at all. It was to be all gentlemen, and no pay. And it was during this state of matters that Jeffrey doubted its success, and meant to have a very short connection with it. But this blunder was soon corrected by a magnificent recurrence to the rule of common sense. Mr. Constable, who

was their publisher, though unfortunate in the end, was the most spirited bookseller that had ever appeared in Scotland. Yet even he seems at one time to have been doubtful of the permanent success of the work, for Mr. Smith gave him the following advice, in a letter which is not dated, but must have been written within the first year of the Review's existence :—“ Sir, You ask me for my opinion about the continuation of the E. Review. I have the greatest confidence in giving it you, as I find everybody here (who is capable of forming an opinion upon the subject) unanimous in the idea of its success, and in the hope of its continuation. It is notorious that all the reviews are the organs either of party or of booksellers. I have no manner of doubt that an *able, intrepid, and independent* review would be as useful to the public as it would be profitable to those who are engaged in it. If you will give £200 per annum to your editor, and ten guineas a sheet, you will soon have the best review in Europe. This town, I am convinced, is preferable to all others for such an undertaking, from the abundance of literary men it contains, and from the freedom which at this distance they can exercise towards the wits of the south. The gentlemen who first engaged in this review will find it too laborious for pleasure ; as labour, I am sure they will not meddle with it for a less valuable offer.—I remain, Sir, your obedt. humble sert.” &c.

“ P.S.—I do not, by the expressions I have used above, mean to throw any censure on the trade for undertaking reviews. Every one for himself ; God for all. It is fair enough that a bookseller should guide the public to his own shop. And fair enough that a critic should tell the public they are going astray.”

The sagacious Horner recorded his opinion at the time of the credit which this publication would do Jeffrey, by the following entry in his private journal : “ Jeffrey is the person who will derive most honour from this publication,

as his articles in this number are generally known, and are incomparably the best. I have received the greater pleasure from this circumstance, because the genius of that little man has remained almost unknown to all but his most intimate acquaintances. His manner is not at first pleasing; what is worse, it is of that cast which almost irresistibly impresses upon strangers the idea of levity and superficial talents. Yet there is not any man whose real character is so much the reverse. He has indeed a very sportive and playful fancy, but it is accompanied with an extensive and varied information, with a readiness of apprehension almost intuitive, with judicious and calm discernment, with a profound and penetrating understanding." A character drawn with great truth, and a prediction amply confirmed.

Many accounts have been given of the organization by which the work was launched and piloted; but they are all superseded by the following explanation, written by Jeffrey in November, 1846, in answer to a question put by Mr. Robert Chambers, to whom and to his brother William, the public, and especially the poor, have been so deeply indebted for those judicious and cheap publications which have so long instructed and tended to elevate the people:—"I cannot say exactly where the project of the Edinburgh Review was first *talked of*, among the projectors; but the first serious consultations about it, and which led to our application to a publisher, were held in a small house where I then lived in *Buccleuch Place*. (I forget the number.) They were attended by Sidney Smith, F. Horner, Dr. Thomas Brown, Lord Murray, and some of them also by Lord Webb Seymour, Dr. John Thomson, and Thomas Thomson. The first three numbers were *given* to the publisher—he taking the risk and defraying the charges. There was then no individual editor; but as many of us as could be

* This Paper has been more than once published before now.

got to attend, used to meet in a dingy room off Willison's printing office, in Craig's Close, where the *proofs* of our own articles were read over and remarked upon, and attempts made also to sit in judgment on the few manuscripts which were then afforded by strangers. But we had seldom patience to go through with these, and it was found necessary to have a responsible editor, and the office was pressed upon me. About the same time, Constable was told that he must allow ten guineas a sheet to the contributors, to which he at once assented; and not long after, the *minimum* was raised to sixteen guineas, at which it remained during my reign, though two-thirds of the articles were paid much higher—averaging, I should think, from twenty to twenty-five guineas a sheet on the whole number. I had, I might say, an unlimited discretion in this respect, and must do the publishers the justice to say that they never made the slightest objection. Indeed, as we all knew that they had (for a long time at least) a very great profit, they probably felt that they were at our mercy. Smith was by far the most timid of the confederacy, and believed that unless our *incognito* was strictly maintained, we could not go on a day. And this was his object for making us hold our dark divans at Willison's office, to which he insisted on our repairing singly, and by back approaches, or by different lanes!! He also had so strong an impression of ——'s indiscretion and rashness, that he would not let him be a member of our association, though wished for by all the rest. He was admitted, however, after the third number, and did more work for us than anybody. Brown took offence at some alteration Smith had made in a trifling article of his in the second number, and finally left us, thus early—publishing at the same time in a magazine the fact of his secession, a step which we all deeply regretted, and thought scarcely justified by the provocation. Nothing of the kind occurred ever after."

In saying that "*there was no individual editor*," he does

not mean to throw the slightest doubt on Mr. Smith's statement, (p. 101,) that he (Smith) edited the first number,—but only that though Mr. Smith did so actually, it was not done in the capacity of an official editor, formally appointed.

In the midst of the excitement and applause of this work, he was saddened by the prospect of soon losing the society of some of the more eminent friends with whom he had embarked in it. “I foresee the likelihood of our being all scattered before another year shall be over, and of course the impossibility of going on, on the footing upon which we have begun. Indeed, few things have given me more vexation of late than the prospect of the dissolution of that very pleasant and animated society in which I have spent so much of my time for the last four years; and I am really inclined to be very sad when I look forward to the time when I shall be deserted by all the friends and companions who possessed much of my confidence and esteem. You are translated into England already. Horner goes to the English bar in a year. S. Smith leaves this country for ever, about the same time. Hamilton spends his life abroad as soon as his father's death sets him at liberty. Brougham will most probably push into public life even before a similar event gives him a favourable opportunity. Reddie is lost, and absolutely swallowed up, in law. Lord Webb leaves this before winter. Jo. Allan goes abroad with Lord Holland immediately. Adam is gone already, and, except Brown and John Murray, I do not think that one of the associates with whom I have speculated and amused myself, will be left with me in the course of eighteen months. It is not easy to form new intimacies, and I know enough of the people among whom I must look down for them, to be positive that they will never be worthy of their predecessors. Comfort me then, my dear Bobby, in this real affliction.”—(To Morehead, 24th May, 1802.)

It was a real affliction, indeed. But it arose chiefly from

his naturally thinking less of the old friends who were to remain, than of those more recent ones he was about to lose ; and from the impossibility of his then being aware of the happiness of the life that awaited him with other friends whom he gradually acquired.

Of the ten persons mentioned in these communications, only four are now alive, viz :—Lord Brougham, Mr. Reddie, Mr. Thomas Thomson, and Lord Murray. Of these it would be indecorous to speak, in their own presence, as I would desire. Of a person so eminent as Lord Brougham, indeed, it would be even absurd to say any thing in so unworthy a record as this. Of the other three, I shall merely say enough to identify them. Mr. James Reddie was at this time a very rising lawyer ; who has only been excluded from such honours as belong to the learning of the profession, by his settling early in Glasgow as the legal adviser of the municipal corporation. Mr. Murray, who, thirty-two years after this, succeeded Jeffrey in the office of Lord Advocate, is now a judge. Jeffrey had a very warm affection for him ; and the friendship continued unbroken to the last. He was in the same position with relation to Mr. Thomson, the most learned and judicious antiquary in Scotland. No one has done nearly so much to recover, to arrange, to explain, and to preserve our historical muniments. He found them almost a chaos, and, after bringing them into order, has left them on a system of which the value will be felt the more every day that they accumulate. His real merit, great as it may seem now, will seem still greater five hundred years hence. He is at present one of the principal clerks in the Supreme Court. Had he not allowed his taste for antiquarian research to allure him from the common drudgery of his profession, he would have stood high in his practice, as he always did in character, at the bar ; and would now have been adorning the bench by his considerate wisdom and peculiar learning.

The celebrity of those who are gone makes it unnecessary for me to attempt to describe them. Mr. Smith is known by his works; Mr. Allen, by his writings, and by Lord Brougham's account of him;* Mr. Horner, by his Memoirs; Mr. Brown, by his Lectures, and his Life by Welsh; and Lord Webb Seymour, a brother of the Duke of Somerset, by the Biographical Notice of him by Mr. Hallam,† one of the best portraits of a character in writing that exists. He had come to Edinburgh in 1797, and resided there till his lamented death in 1819. Horner and Playfair were his particular friends, and all of that calm cast were so congenial to his truth-seeking mind, that we used sometimes to admire his good nature in tolerating the levity of Jeffrey. But Seymour loved him sincerely, and this in spite of his serene spirit being often troubled by onsets on his most cherished doctrines, and even by laughter at his grand philosophical designs. But a warm mutual affection bound them together. Never was a stranger more universally beloved in a city than Seymour was. The very people on the streets reverenced the thoughtful air and countenance of the English nobleman who honoured the place by making it his home.

Mr. Hamilton was a Scotchman, who had been in India; a little, amiable person of excellent conversation, and great knowledge of Oriental literature. He was afterward professor of Sanscrit in the East India College at Haileybury.

Dr. John Thomson was of the medical profession. Beginning as a surgeon, he afterward rose to extensive practice as a physician, and obtained the chair of Pathology in the College of Edinburgh. He was a man of learning and enthusiasm, and contributed several valuable papers to the earlier numbers of the *Review*. Jeffrey and he continued in habits of intimate friendship till Thomson's death, on the 11th of October, 1846.

* *Historical Sketches.*

† In the Appendix to the first volume of the *Memoirs of Horner.*

Jeffrey's anticipations of the loss of the leading persons in this society proved true. It soon began to dissolve, and within three years from the date of his last letter, had almost totally disappeared. The individual friendships survived ; but, as an Edinburgh brotherhood, it had ceased. How fortunate it is that his own anchor was fixed in his native soil, and that he could not follow his friends into scenes which no one was fitter to shine in ; but which, however fascinating to ambition, were not more favourable to happiness than the more peaceful ones to which he was moored. He himself soon came to think so. Writing to Horner, (5th January, 1804,) he asks about Smith's prospects, and says, “I am afraid Edinburgh is out of his scheme of life now, at all events ; though I console myself with believing that you have all committed a great mistake in leaving it, and that we have here capabilities of happiness that will not so easily be found anywhere else.”

There is little else to be told of this interesting band. They formed a distinct and marked sect ; distinguished by their reputation, their Whiggism, and their strong mutual coherence. There were a few men of the opposite party, or rather of no party, by whom they were kindly received, such as Dr. James Gregory, the Rev. Archibald Alison, Mr. Henry Mackenzie, and Scott. But by the old Tories of the correct stamp, they were disdained ; and by the young ones, in whose imaginations their principles were only aggravated by their talents and their gaiety, they were viewed with genuine horror. This condensed them the more. In themselves they were all merry, even the thoughtful Horner. They were all full of hope ; not one of them seeming ever to doubt that he would yet do something. They were all very industrious. But, hard students though they were, they were always ready for a saunter, or a discussion, and particularly for an hilarious supper. “I despair (writes Jeffrey to Allen, on the 21st January, 1804) of finding any substitute for those quiet and confi-

dential parties in which we used to mingle, and play the fool together." They all attained eminence in their respective paths; and none of them ever forgot those old Edinburgh days. Brown and John Thomson both left the Review from offence, in its infancy; but this never impaired the editor's regard, or that of his associates, for them. And it was toward Jeffrey that the group gravitated. Several of them surpassed him in individual qualities, but none in general power; and this was attested, in spite of occasional perturbations, by their all practically acknowledging him as their centre.

Although he happens to mention Brown and Murray as his only remaining associates, he only means those "with whom I have speculated and amused myself." He had many other valued friends left; and among others—the only person here who overshadowed his literary fame—Walter Scott. Every thing that ever occurred between these two has been stated by Mr. Lockhart in his life of Sir Walter; and I have only to explain that, though always on excellent terms, their political opinions, and the one being the critic and the other the criticized, interfered with their being on habits of daily and confidential intimacy. Scott, in mentioning Jeffrey to Byron, (16th July, 1812,) describes him as "my friend Jeffrey, for such, *in spite of many a feud, literary and political*, I always esteem him," which discloses the obstacles that their regard had to contend with. Even so late as 1827, in mentioning a party at Mr. Murray's, where he met Jeffrey and other Whig friends, he observes in his journal, "I do not know how it is, but when I am with a party of my opposition friends, the day is often merrier than with our own set;" and he accounts for this, by saying, that "both parties meet with the feeling of *something like novelty*." The fact that even to a person of Scott's joviality and frankness, a dinner together was a novelty, shows that their friendship, though solid, was not embodied in habitual intercourse.

Jeffrey had a son, born in September, 1802; but he died on the 25th of October, after a few hours of gentle illness. The sudden extinction of this child made him nervous about all infantine maladies ever after.

There are few men whom the fame and the occupation of the Review would not have withdrawn from such obscure professional employment as had yet fallen, or seemed likely to fall, to his share. But, with his usual prudence and energy, he struggled to counteract the injury which a known addiction to any other pursuit almost invariably does to that of the law, by additional attention to whatever its practice required. He was well aware of the precariousness of an income depending on authorship, and knew that literature was seldom more graceful than when combined with something more solid, and, particularly, with eminence in a liberal profession, leading to public consequence and to high honours. In telling Horner, (11th May, 1803,) who had left Edinburgh in the end of the preceding March, that he had agreed to become the regular editor, he says, “If I do that well, and am regular in my attendance, &c., perhaps the knowledge of my new occupation may not very materially impede my advancement. It will be known that my connection with the Review is not for life, and that I will renounce it as soon as I can do without it. The risk of sinking in the general estimation, and being considered as fairly articled to a trade that is not perhaps the most respectable, has staggered me more, I will acknowledge, than any other consideration. I certainly would not leave, or even degrade, my profession, by becoming the editor of any other journal in the kingdom; but I cannot help thinking that there are some peculiarities in our publication that should remove a part of these scruples.”

Being informed that his brother was contemplating marriage in America, he encouraged him by this account of his own conjugal condition:—“After the experience of

summer and winter, health and sickness, gayety and sorrow, I can say, conscientiously, that marriage has been to me a source of inestimable happiness ; and that I should be much inclined to measure a man's capacities of goodness by the effect it produces on him. The great good, certainly, is the securing one steady and affectionate friend, to whom all your concerns are important, whom nothing can alienate or pervert, and with whom there can be no misapprehension, concealment, or neglect. This is the true basis upon which habit and recollection build a thousand secondary affections. To you I think marriage will be of unusual advantage ; for your wandering and unsettled life made *fixation* particularly necessary ; and the light holds of casual friendship and idle acquaintances will be in danger of producing a cold and selfish impatience of stronger and narrower ties. As to your choice, I dare say it is excellent. Indeed, a man of tolerable sense can hardly choose ill, if he do not choose in a fever of admiration. For most part of the endearment that makes the happiness of marriage, comes after the romantic ardours have blazed out. Your Susan will not think this very complimentary, so I beg you would not tell her ; but say, I am sure, she is an angel, and that there is no angel I long so much to meet with. I am glad she is little, for the honour of our fraternity ; and think, indeed, from your whole description, that she would suit me much better than the wife I have, who is constantly insulting me on my stature and my levity. Perhaps we may negotiate an exchange when we meet, after the fashion of the ancient Britons."

When Horner withdrew from Edinburgh, he left a legacy of his bar wig to Jeffrey, who tells him, after trying it about a fortnight,—“ Your wig attracts great admiration, and I hope in time it will attract great fees also. But in spite of the addition it makes to my honour and beauty, I must confess that the Parliament House appears duller and more ridiculous this season than usual. Some of the last

wearer's contempt, I suppose, still sticks to the cowl of the said wig, and oozes into my head. Now that the evenings are growing long, and the town empty, I often wish you were here to speculate with me upon Queen Street."—(26th May, 1803.) The hairdresser who made one wig fit these two, ought to have been elevated to the deaconship of the craft; for nature never produced two heads less alike, either in form or bulk. The explanation, however, is that almost all wigs were the same to Jeffrey, for none ever fitted him. He and his wig were always on bad terms; and the result was that he very seldom wore one. Throughout nearly the whole of the last fifteen or twenty years of his practice, he was conspicuous, and nearly solitary, in his then black and bushy hair.

It was in 1803 that a private institution arose, upon which much of his social happiness and that of many of his best friends depended for nearly forty years. He says to Horner, (15th June, 1803,)—"I forgot to ask Murray if he has told you about our *club*. In two words, it is to be a weekly meeting of all the literary and social persons in the city; and we set out last Friday with sixteen. The idea was Walter Scott's. All his friends are included, and all ours. We have besides, John Playfair, Alex. Irving, H. Mackenzie, Sir James Hall, and I believe Alison. Our compliment is to be thirty, and two black balls to exclude any candidate. I think it promises to unite the literature of the place more effectually and extensively than any thing else. You shall be admitted as a visitor when you can spare us a vacation visit." This refers to the Friday club—so called from the day on which it first used to meet. It was entirely of a literary and social character, and was open, without any practical limitation of numbers, to any person generally resident in Edinburgh, who was supposed to combine a taste for learning or science with agreeable manners, and especially with perfect safety. The following were all the members, with the years of their joining, who

ever belonged to it. Those marked by an asterisk are the present survivors:—

1803. Sir James Hall—geology and architecture, &c.

Dugald Stewart.

John Playfair.

Rev. Archd. Alison—sermons, essays on taste.

Rev. Sidney Smith.

Rev. John Elmsley, Oxford.

Alex. Irving, afterward Lord Newton, a Judge.

William Erskine, afterward Lord Kinnedar, a Judge.

George Cranstoun, afterward Lord Corehouse, a Judge.

Sir Walter Scott.

Francis Jeffrey.

*Thomas Thomson, afterward Clerk of Session—various antiquarian works.

Dr. John Thomson, physician and professor—lectures on inflammation, &c. &c.

*John A. Murray, afterward Lord Advocate, now Lord Murray.

*Henry Brougham.

Henry Mackenzie—the Man of Feeling, &c.

Henry J. Mackenzie, Lord Mackenzie, a Judge.

Malcolm Laing, historian.

*H. Cockburn, now Lord Cockburn, a Judge.

*John Richardson, solicitor in London.

John Allen.

Francis Horner.

Thomas Campbell—Pleasures of Hope, &c. &c.

1804. Alex. Hamilton, orientalist.

Andrew Coventry, physician, and professor of agriculture.

John Robinson, professor of natural history—Life of Black, &c. &c.

*George Strickland, afterward Sir George, M. P.

Andrew Dalzell, professor of Greek.
Lord Webb Seymour.
Earl of Selkirk—emigration, &c. &c.
Lord Glenbervie.

1807. Rev. John Thomson.

1810. John Jeffrey.

1811.*Thomas F. Kennedy, of Dunure, formerly M. P.,
Treasurer of Ireland, &c., now Commissioner of
Woods and Forests.

*John Fullerton, now Lord Fullerton, a Judge.

1812. George Wilson, retired English lawyer.

1814. John Gordon, physician.

1816.*Andrew Rutherford, since Lord Advocate, and now
Lord Rutherford, a Judge.

1817. James Keay, of Snaigo, advocate.

1825.*Leonard Horner, late President of the Geological
Society, London—his brother's memoirs, &c.

* James Pillans, professor of humanity.

1826.*Count M. De Flahaut.
David Cathcart, Lord Alloway, a Judge.

1827.*Earl of Minto, Lord Privy Seal.
*William Murray, of Henderland.

1830.*Mountstuart Elphinstone, India.

1833.*James Abercrombie, afterward Speaker.

“It was announced at the last club that Lord Webb was to pass next winter in Edinburgh. I hope you will confirm this, and send him down fully convinced that, without being a member of the said club, it is impossible to have any tolerable existence in Edinburgh.”—(To Horner, 8th August, 1803.) This was not exactly the fact, for there were many literary and excellent men who were never in it; but no one acquainted with this place can fail to perceive that these are distinguished Edinburgh names; perhaps the most so that have been united, and adhered so long in any such association in our day. Admission as members was re-

stricted to those living in Edinburgh; but strangers were very freely introduced as visitors. At first the club met weekly, and only to supper, a favourite refection in old Edinburgh, and one that, not only in 1803, but for many years thereafter, was cultivated as a necessary part of life, in a majority of rational houses. "Our club comes on admirably. We have got Dugald Stewart, the Man of Feeling, Sir James Hall, John Playfair, and four or five more of the senior literati, and we sit chatting every week till two o'clock in the morning."—(To John, 30th July, 1803.) However, though there be more cheerfulness, ease, and kindness at one supper than at a dozen of heavy dinners, still, like other excellent things, they have fallen under the fashionable ban, and will soon be unknown; for though the two be sometimes compared, nothing is less like a supper than a late dinner. Even the Friday's weekly suppers came to be aided by a monthly banquet at six o'clock; and then the Roman meal disappeared as the principal repast. But the philosophers rarely parted without supper too. The dinner took place throughout seven months in the year, and parsimony was certainly not one of its vices. We were troubled by no written laws, no motions, no disputes, no ballots, no fines, no business of any kind, except what was managed by one of ourselves as secretary; an office held by Mr. Richardson from 1803 to 1806, when he settled in London; by me, from 1806 to 1834; then by Mr. Rutherford. Nobody was admitted by any formal vote. New members grew in silently, by a sort of elective attraction. The established taste was for quiet talk and good wine.

And here were many of the best social evenings of some of our best men passed. After Smith and one or two more left us to ourselves, Scott, Thos. Thomson, Jeffrey, and Playfair were the best clubbists. Scott was absent very seldom, the other three almost never. The professional art of show conversation was held in no esteem. Colloquial ambition would have been so entirely out of place,

that there was never even an indication of its approach. The charm was in having such men in their natural condition, during their “careless and cordial hours.” The preceding asterisks tell why the association has, for some years, been practically dissolved. Death, sickness, and age, having extinguished its light, it has been wisely allowed to pass away.

The College was established at Calcutta about the beginning of the century, and Jeffrey was in some danger of being lost by having the honour of obtaining its chair of moral and political science. Horner, who seems to have suggested the scheme, actually advised him to go into this respectable banishment. “I shall have the purest and most cordial pleasure when I hail you professor”—(8th November, 1803;) and Jeffrey himself was actually anxious to be so hailed. He said that his feelings consisted of—“1st, A great obligation to you, and *something like humiliation in the persuasion of not deserving so high an estimation.* 2d, A tolerably sober persuasion that I should not be qualified for the duties of the situation; and 3d, A sort of assurance that it will never be put in my power.” He adds, however,—“I think I may venture to say that *I should be extremely gratified by such an appointment.* Why do you not apply for it to yourself?”—(12th November, 1803.) In a few days he says, “I wait your further communications in perfect tranquillity, and shall bear my disappointment, I am persuaded, as heroically as I did in the case of the collectors of decisions.”—(22d November, 1803.) What became of the plan I do not know; but, mercifully, he did not get it. Poverty alone, the usual reason for voluntary exile, accounts for his ever harbouring the thought of taking it. His professional income this year, after above nine years anxious and steady attendance at the bar, was only £240.—(Letter to Horner, 21st March, 1804.)

The intended gown of the Asiatic professor was succeeded by the uniform of the actual ensign.—“I do not

know if I told you that a heroic band of us have offered our services as riflemen, and that I have great hopes of turning out an illustrious general before the war is over. I am studying the King of Prussia's tactics, and find I get on amazingly."—(To John, 23d July, 1803.) This design failed, and then he took a commission in an excellent Edinburgh battalion. "I am made ensign, with a vast cocked hat; under which I had the satisfaction of shaking hands with Major David Hume, last Saturday, on the parade."—(To Horner, 21st January, 1804.) Volunteering was then unavoidable; whether from patriotism, contagion, or amusement. But it was no nominal service with Jeffrey, because he was a sincere believer in the almost absolute certainty of actual invasion, and that he was to be "piked" at the head of his company. This was certainly not the usual practical feeling. Very few went to parade with any serious impression of either immediate personal or public danger. I forget how long he remained under the cocked hat, but I never saw a worse soldier. He never even got the length of being at home in his uniform, and never cared about his military business; but seemed to be always absorbed in his own speculations. I doubt if the King of Prussia's tactics enabled him to face his company either to the right or to the left.

Toward the close of this year, (1803,) he was forced into a dispute so contemptible, that, as it is the duty of biography rather to cleanse away, than to perpetuate incidents, which, though they might gratify diseased curiosity, neither illustrate character, nor are of any intrinsic value, I would not notice it had it not been that Jeffrey made it the subject of a public defence. The substance of the matter is this:—Mr. John Thelwall, who was acquitted of high treason in London, in 1794, published a volume of poems, which, in April, 1803, Jeffrey had reviewed (No. 3, art. 21) with what he thought just ridicule and contempt. Mr. Thelwall came to Edinburgh in December thereafter, and

tried a course of public lectures “On Elocution and Oratory.” The course failed on the very first performance from the laughter of the audience, aggravated, no doubt, by the personal unpopularity here of the lecturer. In a few days Mr. Thelwall published a long and very violent pamphlet; which, besides answering the review, charged Jeffrey with having *confederated* with certain associates to obstruct the lecture, and with having carried this conspiracy into effect by concealing himself behind a screen, and making the necessary signals. All this was stated in the most offensive possible terms. It was thought right, though contrary to Horner’s opinion, that Jeffrey should answer, which he did in a few pages, denying the statements. Mr. Thelwall, in order to remove the doubts of his friends by identifying Jeffrey as the conspirator behind the screen, went into the court, and pointed out the guilty man. But this happened to be Sir Walter Scott’s friend, Mr. William Erskine; whose dislike of the traitor, which he and others held the acquitted man to be, had no doubt been conspicuous enough at the lecture; though certainly without any concealment or confederacy. Notwithstanding this refutation of the charge, the whole statements were repeated in a reply by Mr. Thelwall, “*To the calumnies, misrepresentations, and literary forgeries*” of his reviewer.*

Jeffrey was in London in the spring of 1804, for the first time, apparently, since the review had given him celebrity; and enjoyed that world with the delight with which, as a temporary excitement, he always tasted it. “I have come (he tells his brother, 12th April, 1804) on the pretext of recruiting for reviews, and of attending an appeal cause; but *entre nous*, my chief motive has been to enjoy the society of some of my best friends, that are now settled in this place, and to solace myself with the spectacle and the conversation of such of the great political and literary cha-

* I have been told that, many years afterward, they met amicably.

racters as I can get access to. Hitherto I have found the avenues very open, and have been received into a great deal of good company with some favour and distinction. To say the truth, I never saw any thing of London before, and I enter into any thing that is proposed to me with all the ardour and expectation of a boy from college. I find so much to do and to attend to, that I regret the necessity of eating and sleeping, and, indeed, have not been five hours in bed at a time since my arrival. The literary men, I acknowledge, excite my reverence the least. The powerful conversations alarm me a good deal; and the great public orators fill me with despair."

Of course he could not find in Scotland, or anywhere else, the variety and the brilliancy of London society. But he returned to a society which he entirely loved, and which was worthy of him; and in which he was beginning to rise into that unanimous esteem which he at last, though not speedily, reached. The society of Edinburgh was not that of a provincial town, and cannot be judged of by any such standard. It was metropolitan. Trade or manufactures have, fortunately, never marked this city for their own. But it is honoured by the presence of a college famous throughout the world; and from which the world has been supplied with many of the distinguished men who have shone in it. It is the seat of the supreme courts of justice, and of the annual convocation of the Church, formerly no small matter; and of almost all the government offices and influence. At the period I am referring to, this combination of quiet with aristocracy made it the resort, to a far greater extent than it is now, of the families of the gentry, who used to leave their country residences and enjoy the gayety and the fashion which their presence tended to promote. Many of the curious characters and habits of the receding age, the last purely Scotch age that Scotland was destined to see, still lingered among us. Several were then to be met with who had seen the Pretender, with his court

and his wild followers, in the palace of Holyrood. Almost the whole official state, as settled at the union, survived ; and all graced the capital, unconscious of the economical scythe which has since mowed it down. All our nobility had then not fled. A few had sense not to feel degraded by being happy at home. The old town was not quite deserted. Many of our principal people still dignified its picturesque recesses and historical mansions, and were dignified by them. The closing of the Continent sent many excellent English families and youths among us, for education and for pleasure. The war brightened us with uniforms, and strangers, and shows.

Over all this there was diffused the influence of a greater number of persons attached to literature and science, some as their calling, and some for pleasure, than could be found, in proportion to the population, in any other city in the empire. Within a few years, including the period I am speaking of, the college contained Principal Robertson, Joseph Black, his successor Hope, the second Munro, James Gregory, John Robison, John Playfair, and Dugald Stewart ; none of them confined monastically to their books, but all (except Robison, who was in bad health) partaking of the enjoyments of the world. Episcopacy gave us the Rev. Archibald Alison ; and in Blair, Henry, John Home, Sir Harry Moncrieff, and others, Presbytery made an excellent contribution, the more to be admired that it came from a church which eschews rank, and boasts of poverty. The law, to which Edinburgh has always been so largely indebted, sent its copious supplies ; who, instead of disturbing good company by professional matter, an offence with which the lawyers of every place are charged, were remarkably free of this vulgarity ; and being trained to take difference of opinion easily, and to conduct discussions with forbearance, were, without undue obtrusion, the most cheerful people that were to be met with. Lords Monboddo, Hailes, Glenlee, Meadowbank, and Woodhouselee, all literary

judges, and Robert Blair, Henry Erskine, and Henry Mackenzie, senior, were at the earlier end of this file ; Scott and Jeffrey at the later ; but including a variety of valuable persons between these extremities. Sir William Forbes, Sir James Hall, and Mr. Clerk of Eldin, represented a class of country gentlemen cultivating learning on its account. And there were several, who, like the founder of the Huttonian Theory, selected this city for their residence solely from the consideration in which science and letters were here held, and the facilities, or rather the temptations, presented for their prosecution. Philosophy had become indigenous in the place, and all classes, even in their gayest hours, were proud of the presence of its cultivators. Thus learning was improved by society, and society by learning. And unless when party spirit interfered, which at one time, however, it did frequently and bitterly, perfect harmony, and indeed lively cordiality, prevailed.

And all this was still a Scotch scene. The whole country had not begun to be absorbed in the ocean of London. There were still little great places ;—places with attractions quite sufficient to retain men of talent or learning in their comfortable and respectable provincial positions ; and which were dignified by the tastes and institutions which learning and talent naturally rear. The operation of the commercial principle which tempts all superiority to try its fortune in the greatest accessible market, is perhaps irresistible ; but any thing is surely to be lamented which annihilates local intellect, and degrades the provincial spheres which intellect and its consequences can alone adorn. According to the modern rate of travelling, the capitals of Scotland and of England were then about 2400 miles asunder. Edinburgh was still more distant in its style and habits. It had then its own independent tastes, and ideas, and pursuits. Enough of the generation that was retiring survived to cast an antiquarian air over the city, and the generation that was advancing was still a

Scotch production. Its character may be estimated by the names I have mentioned; and by the fact that the genius of Scott and of Jeffrey had made it the seat at once of the most popular poetry, and the most brilliant criticism that then existed. This city has advantages, including its being the capital of Scotland, its old reputation, and its external beauties, which have enabled it, in a certain degree, to resist the centralizing tendency, and have hitherto always supplied it with a succession of eminent men. But, now that London is at our door, how precarious is our hold of them, and how many have we lost.*

It was in this community that Jeffrey now began to rise. It required some years more to work off the prejudices that had obstructed him, but his genuine excellence did work them off at last; till, from being tolerated, he became liked; from being liked, popular; from being popular, necessary; and in the end was wrapped in the whole love of the place. His favourite social scenes, next to his strictly private ones, were the more select parties where intellect was combined with cheerfulness, and good talk with simplicity. But though a great critic of social manners, no one was less discomposed by vulgarities or stupidities, if combined with worth, when they fell in his way. No clever talking man could have more tolerance than he had for

* There could scarcely have been a more interesting work than one that described the progress of manners in Scotland from about 1740 to 1800, including accounts of the curious and distinguished people who rose during these sixty years. From about 1800, every thing purely Scotch has been fading. A good exhibition of the old habits, and of the eminent and picturesque men who then existed, but were passing away, would have derived a deeper interest from the certainty that no such national peculiarities could be much longer retained. But such a picture could only have proceeded from a man of observation and intelligence, who had lived in the very scenes, and either collected his materials at the time, or wrote from a vigilant and candid memory. It is to be feared that it can never be done now. But the whole previous history of Scotland furnishes no such subject.

common-place people; a class, indeed, to which many of his best friends belonged. I have heard him, when the supercilious were professing to be shocked by such persons, thank God that he had never lost his taste for bad company.

ment, and I am sure I shall never forget the agitation I then suffered."

He never forgot another thing. His affection for her who was gone, was continued for her children, to whom he was ever a kind and faithful uncle. The duties of that relationship could not be performed with greater fidelity or love. They deserved his kindness; but it was also a constantly renewed homage to the memory of their mother.

A letter to Horner (28th October, 1804) contains a prediction, which, had Horner's life been spared, would very probably have been realised.—“Betty's book (he means Miss Hamilton) has not reached me yet. I mean to be merciful, if I touch her at all. To say the truth, I am sick of abusing. I have not been writing any session (law) papers, nor any thing half so good. Nor do I expect to be Lord Advocate till you are Lord Chancellor.”

Another of his Edinburgh friends left him soon after this. “Nothing (he writes to Horner, 19th November, 1804) but emigration to London. My good friend Charles Bell is about to follow your cursed example. He has almost determined to fly, and to take shelter in the great asylum. I have a very great affection and esteem for him, and can, moreover, assure you that you will find him very modest, intelligent, honourable, grateful, and gentle.”

Severe as the death of his sister had been, a far heavier calamity now fell upon him. Mrs. Jeffrey had been in feeble health for some time, but was not supposed to be in danger, when on the 8th of August, 1805, she died. His utter desolation upon this unexpected annihilation of all his enjoyments and hopes can be described by no one but himself. He told his brother what happened in the following letter:—“Edinburgh, 15th August, 1805.—My dear John, I am at this moment of all men the most miserable and disconsolate. It is just a week to-day since my sweet Kitty died in my arms, and left me without joy, or hope, or comfort, in this world. Her health had been

long very delicate, and during this summer rather more disordered than usual; but we fancied she was with child, and rather looked forward to her complete restoration. She was finally seized with the most excruciating headaches, which ended in an effusion of water on the brain, and sank her into a lamentable stupor, which terminated in death. It is impossible for me to describe to you the feeling of lonely and hopeless misery with which I have since been oppressed. I doted upon her, I believe, more than man ever did on a woman before; and after four years of marriage, was more tenderly attached to her than on the day which made her mine. I took no interest in any thing which had not some reference to her, and had no enjoyment away from her, except in thinking what I should have to tell or to show her on my return; and I have never returned to her, after half a day's absence, without feeling my heart throb, and my eye brighten, with all the ardour and anxiety of a youthful passion. All the exertions I ever made in the world were for her sake entirely. You know how indolent I was by nature, and how regardless of reputation and fortune. But it was a delight to me to lay these things at the feet of my darling, and to invest her with some portion of the distinction she deserved, and to increase the pride and the vanity she felt for her husband, by accumulating these public tests of his merit. She had so lively a relish for life too, and so unquenchable and unbroken a hope in the midst of protracted illness and languor, that the stroke which cut it off for ever appears equally cruel and unnatural. Though familiar with sickness, she seemed to have nothing to do with death. She always recovered so rapidly, and was so cheerful, and affectionate, and playful, that it scarcely entered into my imagination that there could be one sickness from which she would not recover. We had arranged several little projects of amusement for the autumn, and she talked of them, poor thing, with unabated confidence and delight, as long as she was

able to talk coherently at all. I have the consolation to think that the short time she passed with me was as happy as love and hope could make it. In spite of her precarious health, she has often assured me that she was the happiest of women, and would not change her condition with any human creature. Indeed we lived in a delightful progress of every thing that could contribute to our felicity. Every thing was opening and brightening before us. Our circumstances, our society, were rapidly improving, our understandings were expanding, and even our love and confidence in each other increasing from day to day. Now, I have no interest in any thing, and no object or motive for being in the world. I wish you had known my Kitty, for I cannot describe her to you, and nobody else knows enough of her. The most peculiar and ennobling part of her character was a high principle of honour, integrity, and generosity, that would have been remarkable in a man, and which I never met with in a woman before. She had no conception of prevaricating, shuffling, or disguising. There was a clear transparency in her soul, without affectation or reserve, which won your implicit confidence, and commanded your respect. Then she was the simplest and most cheerful of human beings; the most unassuming, easy, and affectionate; dignified in her deportment, but affable and engaging in conversation. Her sweetness and cheerfulness in sickness won the hearts of all who came near her. She was adored by her servants, and has been wept for by her physicians, by the chairmen who used to carry her, and the tradesmen with whom she dealt. O! my dear John, my heart is very cold and heavy, and my prospect of life every way gloomy and deplorable. I had long been accustomed to place all my notions of happiness in domestic life; and I had found it there, so pure, perfect, and entire, that I can never look for it any where else, or hope for it in any other form. Heaven protect you from the agony it has imposed upon me. Write me soon to say that you are happy,

and that you and your Susan will love me. My heart is shut at this time to every thing but sorrow, but I think it must soon open to affection. All your friends here are well. I shall write you again soon. Ever, my dear John, most affectionately yours."—F. J.

All his letters upon this bereavement are fraught with the same tenderness and despair. He never, before or after, was in such suffering, or in such danger. Mrs. Jeffrey was sensible, cheerful, affectionate, and natural; well qualified to recommend him, and to gratify that strong home taste on which, amidst all his worldly gayety, his real enjoyment almost wholly depended. When his first fabric of happiness was overthrown, and he was left to the loneliness of his own house, with his wife and child in their graves, and neither brother nor sister beside him, there was reason to fear that his sensibility would be too deeply and too permanently agitated to admit of his carrying on the progress in which he had been so steadily advancing. But his good sense and resolute principle prevailed, and he compelled himself to adhere to the course of his prescribed life. Neither the Review nor his profession were abandoned: society, instead of being renounced, was resorted to more largely as an interruption to the bitterness of his domestic solitude.* Seen externally, he might have been mistaken for one on whose heart sorrow sat lightly. But the truth was told to Horner.—(12th October 1805.)

"I thank you for the repeated inquiries into the state of my feelings. I do not think that time has made any great change on them; yet you will find me social enough, and even gay in society. I cannot bear to talk of what engrosses almost all my thoughts, and tremble at the idea of

* The gentle and pious Cowper, when in one of his afflictions, tells Newton (3d August 1781) that "Dissipation itself would be welcome to me, so that it were not a vicious one; but, however earnestly invited, it is coy, and keeps at a distance."

suggesting to those about me the bitter recollections on which I am secretly dwelling. My friends at a distance know much more of the state of my mind than those who are near me. I can write, or rather I cannot help writing, about them, but I cannot speak. The sight of a serene countenance, the sound of a cheerful voice, locks up my heart. I have never shed a tear in the sight of any male being, but George Bell, whom I have known from my infancy, and who was acquainted with my poor Kitty for years before we were married. I will tell you honestly the state of my mind, my dear Horner, because I know you will neither despise me nor wonder at me. I am inwardly sick of life, and take no serious interest in any of the objects it offers to me. I receive amusement from its common occurrences very nearly as formerly; but I have no longer any substantial happiness, and every thing that used to communicate it oppresses me. My imagination and my understanding are exercised as they used to be, but my heart is dead and cold; and I return from these mechanical and habitual exertions to weep over my internal desolation, and to wonder why I linger here."

Notwithstanding this, strong reason, and a strong sense of duty, made him resist despair and cling to his living friendships, and adhere to the performance of all his tasks; and time began to work its miracle.

The 13th number of the Review, in October, 1805, contained an article by him on Southey's *Madoc*. Most people reading that paper now, and considering the oblivion into which the poem has fallen, will be surprised at the praise given to it, and at the striking beauties pointed out. But as it also pointed out great defects, of course the author's anger was much beyond his gratitude. Mr. Southey came to Edinburgh on the 12th of October, and the article was sent to him before it was given to the public. Jeffrey tells Mr. Horner in a letter dated that day, that "Southey is to be here to-day with P. Elmsley. I mean to let him read

my review of Madoc before I put myself in the way of meeting with him. He is too much a man of the world, I believe, in spite of his poesy, to decline seeing me, whatever he may think of the critic." They met after this, and, among other places, at the Friday Club; and this is Southey's impression of his new acquaintance:—"I have seen Jeffrey, &c. I met him in good humour, being, by God's blessing, of a happy temper. Having seen him, it would be impossible to be angry at any thing so diminutive. We talked upon the question of taste, on which we are at issue; he is a mere child upon that subject. I never met with a man who it was so easy to checkmate." —(Letter to Will. Taylor, 22d October, 1805, in Robberd's Life of Taylor, vol. ii. p. 101.) Jeffrey's being a child in taste and easily checkmated in discussion, will probably strike those who knew him as novelties in his character. He was much more likely to have played on in spite of the check or to have prevented his antagonist from seeing that it had been given.

In spring of 1806, another, and the last of the emigrations of his comrades, took place by the departure for London of Mr. John Richardson, now of Kirklands, and one of the most distinguished of the respectable body of Scotch solicitors there. He is already favourably known to the public by the biographies of his friends Scott and Campbell; and the more that the lives of others of the best literary men of his time shall be disclosed, the more will his merit as their associate appear. Few persons have combined with greater success, and with less ostentation, the regular toil of a laborious profession, with the indulgence of a literary taste. Had he followed the bent of his inclination, literature would probably have been his vocation. But he has done much better, were it only by the example which he has set. He knew Jeffrey in the days of the Lawnmarket, from which beginning there was nothing but friendship ever between them. So far back as

1801, (17th March,) Jeffrey, writing to Campbell, who had arranged a journey with Richardson to Germany, says:—
“Among other things, I envy you not a little for your companion. I do not know *any man* with whom a constant and intimate society would be so pleasing. He has a gentleness of character that must soften vexation, and make fretfulness ashamed; and he is the only person I have ever met with who had all the enthusiasm and simplicity of the romantic character, without one shade either of its pedantry or its ridicule.”

The Whigs were in office from the end of 1805 to April, 1807. But deeply as Jeffrey reverenced their principles, and powerfully as he ever maintained their cause, this gleam of their success made no change in his position, and, except on public grounds, seems not to have interested his thoughts. He joined the people of Scotland in the few and slight efforts for their political elevation which they could then make. But the local managers of the government had an inadequate idea of his importance; and his relations to them were not improved by an article which had appeared in the Review (No. 8, art. 8) on a work on political economy by the Earl of Lauderdale, and had given mortal offence to the noble author, who acted as the Scotch minister; which offence had not been assuaged by certain pamphlets on both sides, by which the criticism had been succeeded.

In summer of 1806, he revisited London with Mr. Thomson and Mr. Murray. The 16th number of the Review had been published shortly before. It contained an article which produced a temporary difference between him and Moore. It was a criticism by Jeffrey on Moore’s “Epistles, Odes, and other Poems,” and contained as severe a condemnation of these productions, on the ground of their immorality, as the English language, even when wielded by Jeffrey, could express. The critic, of course, was to be supposed to have been only discussing the book;

but there was a cordiality, and a personal application in the censure, which made it natural for the public, and nearly irresistible for the author, to refer it to the man. This (no matter through what details) led to a hostile meeting near London, on the 11th of August, 1806, when Horner acted as Jeffrey's friend. The police, fortunately, had discovered what was intended, and suddenly apprehended the parties when they were in the very act of proceeding to the very last extremity.* Being bound over to keep the peace in this country, they were very nearly going over to Hamburgh; but a little explanation made this unnecessary. Mr. Moore withdrew a defiance which he had given on the idea that the imputations were personal; on which Jeffrey declared that he had meant them to be only literary; and the quarrel was ended. The following is Jeffrey's account of the matter to George Joseph Bell, (22d August, 1806):—

“I am happy to inform you that the business is at length amicably settled. Moore agreed to withdraw his defiance; and then I had no hesitation in assuring him (as I was ready to have done at the beginning, if he had applied amicably) that in writing the review I considered myself merely as the censor of the morality of his book, and that I intended to assert nothing as to the personal motives or personal character of the author, of whom I had no knowledge at the time. Those, I think, are the words of my explanation. We have since breakfasted together very lovingly. He has confessed his penitence for what he has

* On reaching the police-office it was found that Jeffrey's pistol contained no bullet then; either because it must have dropped out when the officer *snatched* it from him, or afterward in the officer's hands. Mr. Moore's bullet was still in his pistol, and Mr. Horner was certain that one had been put into Jeffrey's. Yet Byron thought it worth while, but only under the ferocity of the English Bard and Scotch Reviewers, to sneer at “*Little's leadless pistol*;” Little's, moreover, being the one that was *not* leadless.

written, and declared that he will never again apply any little talent he may possess, to such purposes ; and I have said, that I shall be happy to praise him whenever I find that he has abjured those objectionable topics. You are too severe upon the little man. He has behaved with great spirit throughout this business. He really is not profligate, and is universally regarded, even by those who resent the style of his poetry, as an innocent, good-hearted, idle fellow. If he comes to Scotland, as he talks of doing in November, I hope you will not refuse to sit down with him at my table. We were very near going to Hamburgh after we had been bound over here ; but it is much better as it is. I am glad to have gone through this scene, both because it satisfies me that my nerves are good enough to enable me to act in conformity to my notions of propriety without any suffering, and because it also assures me that I am really as little in love with life, as I have been for some time in the habit of professing."

The sincerity of this last sentiment was confirmed by Mr. Horner, who told Sir Charles Bell that, with all his "admiration of Jeffrey's intrepidity, he feared there was much indifference of life."—(Note by Bell at the time.) In a day or two the critic and the criticised met amicably, and were friends ever after. Jeffrey did not merely admire the genius of his adversary, but, after he knew him, had a sincere affection and respect for the man. Moore delights to tell, in one of his prefaces, that "in the most formidable of all my censors, the great master of criticism in our day, I have found since one of the most cordial of all my friends." He came to Scotland, chiefly to visit Jeffrey, in 1825 ; and was asked so often to sing his last new song, "Ship ahoy," that, in another preface, he says that "the upland echoes of Craigcrook ought long to have had its burden by heart."

After this affair, leaving Thomson in the British Museum, Jeffrey went with Horner and Murray, and visited the southern coast of England. This was one of his many

journeys for scenery alone. They were more frequent with him than is usual with busy men, and he was never satiated by revisiting places, which, though their novelty was gone, were hallowed by beauty in his imagination. He walked, when very young, with his friend Dr. Maton, through the then solitary valleys of Wales. Many a time did he and Morehead explore the lakes and the mountains of Scotland; and there was as much of the genuine enjoyment of nature, as much affection and speculation, and as many fresh-made sonnets, in one of their foot and knapsack expeditions, as in some journeys of greater pretension. This sensibility to the attractions of nature transpires in all his writings. The very reverse of this quality was sometimes imputed to him by those who had an interest in depreciating his judgments. Knowing that he was a lawyer and a critic, hard trades, they thought that they never could be far wrong in asserting that he had neither romance nor heart for nature. It is possible that out of his masses of critical disquisition, especially in the disputable regions of poetry, angry authors, and even persons in a less partial position, might be able to select passages indicating what they may plausibly represent as a cold or artificial taste. But these blots, if they exist, of which I am not aware, are very few, and entirely accidental; and are extinguished by countless examples of an opposite description, and by the general character of his writings.

He seems to have expected solitude in the south of England in autumn; and of course was tormented every where by the outpourings of London. "For my own part, I think it a great annoyance, and am a thousand times better pleased with pacing alone on the lovely sands, than in renewing a London life, in small hot apartments, and listening to the eternal sophistications of indolent coquetry and languid derision." "I am every hour more convinced of the error of those who look for happiness in any thing but concentrated and tranquil affection; and the still more

miserable error of those who think to lessen the stupidity of a heartless existence, by a laborious course of amusements, and by substituting the gratification of a restless vanity for the exercise of the heart and understanding. If I were to live a hundred years in London, I should never be seduced into that delusion. So you will not tell me what bracelets you would like, say at least whether you mean clasps, or bracelets."—(To Mrs. Morehead, from Bognor Rocks, 25th August, 1806.)

He tried to escape, and crossed to the Isle of Wight, but found the same thing there. "I am glad (to Mr. Morehead, 28th August, 1806,) to have seen these people, and some of them I should like to see again, but I could not live among them. That eternal breaking of time and affection, by living in a crowd, and attending to a thousand things together, would never suit my notions of happiness or respectability. I languish perpetually for the repose and tranquillity of rational and domestic society ; the quietness of the heart, and the activity of the imagination only. You have found this, my dear Bob, and I have lost it for ever."

The only purely Scotch measure that the Whig Government introduced was one for the improvement of the administration of justice ; being the commencement of that succession of organic judicial changes which has gone on almost ever since. Most of the younger Whig lawyers opposed the more important parts of the scheme patronised by their Whig seniors, as unwise in principle, and unsuited to the condition and wants of Scotland. The party lost its power before its object could be accomplished, and a more moderate measure was soon carried by its successors. The juniors were chiefly guided throughout all these discussions by Jeffrey ; who, besides taking a lead in the meetings of the Faculty, wrote a paper in the Review (No. 18, article 14,) which, though Horner calls it "*clever, sceptical, and flippant,*" (Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 10,) was not only amusing,

but sound. It suggested considerations, questioned principles, and tended to abate legal bigotries. His opposition, and that of his followers, was honourable to them, because what they chiefly objected to, was the introduction of two or three high judicial offices, which were notoriously intended for their own political friends, while better men of the opposite party, such as Blair, who was at the head of the bar, were to be set aside.

Mr. John Allen seems to have remonstrated with Jeffrey on his opposition ; to which Jeffrey answers (17th March, 1807,)—“ What is thought of the bill now ? and what is thought of us, and of our virtue ? I am myself most anxious for reform and for great change ; but I cannot dissemble my suspicions of jobbism. It is nonsense to say that this kind of opposition endangers the whole measure. It is infinitely more endangered by the doings to which we are opposed. I shall believe that the supporters of the scheme are seriously persuaded of the utility of a Scottish Chancellor and Court of Review, when I hear that they are to offer it to Blair, who is best entitled to it. At the same time, you know that I love the Whigs, and it grieves me to see that they will act like placemen.”

The material step of reconstructing the court, by dividing it into two chambers, was soon effected by the new Government ; and, to the delight of all fair and reasonable people, Robert Blair was raised to the Presidency of the whole. But, alas ! in two years he—one of the most upright of men, and, from the pure weight of his character, one of the best liked of strict and dignified judges—was followed to the grave by the sorrow of all Edinburgh.

Jeffrey was now on very good terms with all the judges ; but the one as yet on the bench with whom he was most on habits of personal intercourse, was Allan Maconochie, Lord Meadowbank ; a person of very considerable learning, of singular ingenuity, and of restless mental activity. Nothing (except perhaps mathematics) came amiss to him ; but,

besides literature and metaphysics, his favourite subjects used to rise out of any views connected with the theoretical history of man and his progress, which, being inextricably involved in speculation, had peculiar attractions both for him and for Jeffrey. He was a very able judge; full of varied knowledge, and ready at all times for an argument, with any body, upon any thing. The prospect of meeting with this powerful and entertaining intellect was always a temptation to Jeffrey to take a case on the criminal circuit; and although he sometimes thought my lord more ingenious than sound in court, this only whetted the evening discussion, where the one was as good as the other. There are several such incidents as this in his letters, and always with the same term for the judge's supposed error—"I had my trial next day, where I made a merry speech, and was defeated on a *crotchet* of Meadowbank's. I went with William Erskine, who came out to oppose me, to the ball in the evening; but there were only six ladies and no beauties, so I did not stay long, but came home and discussed with Meadowbank." His lordship died in 1816.

The brothers were reduced to a melancholy similarity of fate by the death of John's wife at Boston, in 1806. Francis gave him such consolation and advice as his own experience supplied. "Come, then, my dear John, as soon as you can desert your present duties—come, and find me as affectionate, and unreserved, and domestic, as you knew me in our more careless days. I think I shall be able to comfort you, and revive in you some little interest in life; though I cannot undertake to restore that happiness, which, when once cut down, revives not in this world."—"I hope that, even at present, you do not indulge in solitude. I never had courage for it, and was driven by a cruel instinct into the company of strangers."—(28th January, 1807.) This blow could not sink deeper into John than it had done into Francis; but he was graver and idler, and its effects continued longer.

. His practice, which was always advancing, included the whole of our courts, civil, criminal, and even ecclesiastical, the most fee-less of them all. It was in May, 1807, that I first encountered him in the General Assembly, where for the next twenty years, he had an unchallenged monopoly on one side. A seat, as a member in that house, the only established popular assembly then in Scotland, was a common ambition with such lawyers, whether at the bar or on the bench, as were anxious about a certain description of party affairs, and had no aversion to opportunities of display. It was often wondered how Jeffrey could resist being a member. But he was indifferent about its ordinary business, and thought that the possession of its bar, though its emoluments were scarcely visible, improved his general professional position. He was always interested, moreover, in that singular place.

It is a sort of Presbyterian convocation, which meets, along with a commissioner representing the Crown, for about twelve days yearly. It consists of about 200 clergymen, and about 150 lay elders, presided over by a reverend president, called the Moderator, who is elected by the Assembly annually, and very seldom more than once. Its jurisdiction is both judicial and legislative. As an ecclesiastical parliament, it exercises, subject to very ill-defined limitations, a censorian and corrective authority over all the evils and all affairs of the church. As a court, it deals out what appears to it to be justice upon all ecclesiastical delinquencies and disputes. Its substance survives, but, in its air and tone, it has every year been degrading more and more into the likeness of common things; till at last the primitive features which, half a century ago, distinguished it from every other meeting of men in this country, have greatly faded. Yet how picturesque it still is! The royal commissioner and his attendants, all stiff, brilliant, and grotesque, in court attire: the members gathered from every part of the country,—from growing cities, lonely

glens, distant islands, agricultural districts, universities, and fallen burghs ;—the varieties of dialect and tone, uncorrupted fifty years ago by English ;—the kindly greetings ;—the social arrangements ;—the party plots ;—the strangeness of the subjects ;—partly theological, partly judicial, partly political, often all mixed ;—of the deepest apparent importance to the house, however insignificant or incomprehensible to others ;—the awkwardness of their forms, and the irregularity of their application ;—their ignorance of business ;—the conscientious intolerance of the rival sects ;—the helplessness, when the storm of disorder arises, of the poor shortlived inexperienced moderator ;—the mixture of clergy and laity, of nobility and commoners, civilians and soldiers ;—the curious efforts of oratory ;—the ready laughter, even among the grim ;—and consequently the easy jokes. Higher associations arise when we think of the venerable age of the institution ; the noble struggles in which it has been engaged ; the extensive usefulness of which it is capable ; and the eminent men and the great eloquence it has frequently brought out ; including, in modern times, the dignified persuasiveness of Principal Robertson, the graceful plausibility of Dr. George Hill, the Principal's successor as the leader of the church's majority, the manly energy of Sir Harry Moncrieff, and the burning oratory of Chalmers. Connecting every jurisdiction, and every member of the church (which then meant the people), into one body, it was calculated to secure the benefits, without the dangers, of an official superintendence of morals and religion ; and to do, in a more open and responsible way, for the Church of Scotland, what is done, or not done by the bishops for the Church of England. Such a senate might have continued to direct and control the cheapest, the most popular, and the most republican established church in the world. Its essential defect is as a court of justice. Nothing can ever make a mob of 300 people a safe tribunal for the decision of private causes ;

and the Assembly's forms are framed as if the object were to aggravate the evil.

It met in those days, as it had done for about two hundred years, in one of the aisles of the then grey and venerable cathedral of St. Giles. That plain, square, galleried, apartment was admirably suited for the purpose ; the more so that it was not too large ; and it was more interesting, from the men who had acted in it, and the scenes it had witnessed, than any other existing room in Scotland. It had beheld the best exertions of the best men in the kingdom, ever since the year 1640. Yet was it obliterated in the year 1830, with as much indifference as if it had been of yesterday ; and for no reason except a childish desire for new walls and change. The Assembly sat there for the last time in May, 1829 ; and it has never been the Assembly since.

Its bar, though beneath him, had several attractions for Jeffrey. It needed no legal learning, and no labour beyond attendance ; but always required judgment and management ; it presented excellent opportunities for speaking, especially as the two inconvenient checks of relevancy and pertinency were seldom in rigid observance ; and it was the most popular of all our established audiences. He constantly treated them to admirable speeches,—argumentative, declamatory, or humorous, as the occasion might require. Accordingly, he was a prodigious favourite. They felt honoured by a person of his eminence practising before them ; and their liking for the individual, with his constant liberality and candour, was still stronger than their admiration of his talents, and even their detestation of his politics. It was thought a dull day when he was not there. And when there, he could say and do whatever he chose ; but never risked his popularity by carelessness or presumption ; and never once descended to the vulgarity of pleasing, by any thing unbecoming a counsel of the highest character, and the best taste. He was once in some dan-

ger, when, in defending a clerical client against a charge of drunkenness, he first contested the evidence, and then assuming it to be sufficient, tried to extenuate the offence; and among other considerations, asked, “*If there was a single reverend gentleman in the house who could lay his hand on his heart, and say that he had never been overtaken by the same infirmity?*” There was an instant roar of order, apology, rebuke, &c. But he subdued them at once, by standing till they were quiet, and then saying, with a half innocent, half cunning air,—“*I beg your pardon, moderator,—it was entirely my ignorance of the habits of the Church;*” and the offence was forgiven in a general laugh.

It was in the Assembly, or in connection with its business, that he first became acquainted with his future friend, the late Rev. Sir Harry Moncrieff, Bart.; whom it is the more necessary to mention, because there was no one who had a greater influence over Jeffrey’s conduct and opinions, particularly in relation to Scotch matters.

This eminent person was not merely distinguished among his brethren of the Church of Scotland, all of whom leant upon him, but was in other respects one of the most remarkable and admirable men of his age. Small grey eyes, an aquiline nose, vigorous lips, a noble head, and the air of a plain hereditary gentleman, marked the outward man. The prominent qualities of his mind were, strong integrity and nervous sense. There never was a sounder understanding. Many men were more learned, many more cultivated, and some more able. But who could match him in sagacity and mental force? The opinions of Sir Harry Moncrieff might at any time have been adopted with perfect safety, without knowing more about them than that they were his. And he was so experienced in the conduct of affairs, that he had acquired a power of forming his views with what seemed to be instinctive acuteness, and with a decisiveness which raised them above being lightly questioned. Nor

was it the unerring judgment alone that the public admired. It venerated the honourable heart still more. A thorough gentleman in his feelings, and immovably honest in his principles, his whole character was elevated into moral majesty. He was sometimes described as overbearing. And in one sense, to the amusement of his friends, perhaps he was so. Consulted by every body, and of course provoked by many, and with very undisciplined followers to lead, his superiority gave him the usual confidence of an oracle; and this, operating on a little natural dogmatism, made him sometimes seem positive, and even hard; an impression strengthened by his manner. With a peremptory conclusiveness, a shrill defying voice, and a firm concentrated air, he appeared far more absolute than he really was; for he was ever candid and reasonable. But his real gentleness was often not seen; for if his first clear exposition did not convince, he was not unapt to take up a short disdainful refutation; which, however entertaining to the spectator, was not always comfortable to the adversary. But all this was mere manner. His opinions were uniformly liberal and charitable, and, when not under the actual excitement of indignation at wickedness or dangerous folly, his feelings were mild and benignant; and he liberalised his mind by that respectable intercourse with society which improves the good clergyman, and the rational man of the world.

I was once walking with him in Queen Street, within the last three years of his life. A person approached who had long been an illiberal opponent of his, and for whom I understood that he had no great regard. I expected them to pass without recognition on either side. But instead of this, Sir Harry, apparently to the man's own surprise, stopped, and took him by the hand, and spoke kindly to him. When they separated, I said to Sir Harry that I thought he had not liked that person. "Oh! No. He's

a foolish, intemperate creature. *But to tell you the truth, I dislike a man fewer every day that I live now.*" When the Whigs were in office in 1806, one of his ecclesiastical adversaries, after having always opposed Catholic emancipation, wrote to him that if the subject should be renewed in the next Assembly, he would now support it. It was renewed, but by that time the Whigs were displaced; and that very person opposed it, and among other things had the audacity to say that he could not comprehend how any Protestant clergyman could encourage Popery. Sir Harry was in great indignation, and told me himself that, when answering this, he put his hand into his pocket, and was on the very point of crushing his wavering friend by producing and reading his own letter, but that "*when I looked at ——'s face and saw his wretchedness, I had not the heart to do it.*" These were not the feelings of a hard man.

His great instrument of usefulness was his public speaking; the style of which may be inferred from that of his intellect and manner. In the pulpit, where he was elevated above worldly discord, he often rose into great views and powerful declamation; and he was the noblest deliverer of prayers at striking funerals. But though these professional exertions showed his powers, it was chiefly in the contests of men that his speaking was exerted, and was generally known. On such occasions it was so utterly devoid of ornament, that out of forty years of debate, it would be difficult to cull one sentence of rhetoric. And, though very eloquent, he was never disturbed by the consciousness or the ambition of being so. It was never the eloquence of words, or of sentiments, conceived for effect, but of a high-minded practical man, earnestly impressed with the importance of a practical subject; and who, thinking of his matter alone, dealt in luminous and powerful reasoning; his views clearly conceived, and stated with

simplicity and assuredness. A fearful man to grapple with.*

His writing, though respectable, was feeble, at least to those who knew the energy of his speaking language and manner. The life of Dr. John Erskine was one of the very best subjects for Scotch biography of the last age; and he has not made the most of it. Except in very short writings, on subjects of instant and practical importance, his vigour did not get into his pen.

As almost all our livings belong to the crown or land-owners, there could be little political independence in the church in his day. This made his merit the greater in being a conspicuous and constant Whig. He very seldom mingled in the secular proceedings of the party, but his opinions were well known, and had great influence with the people, to whom his mere name was a tower of strength. Had he not preferred the church to every other object, there is no public honour to which he might not have fought his way. He would have been a powerful counsel of the highest class, an admirable judge, a first-rate head of any important public department, and a great parliamentary leader. His conversation was excellent; spirited, intelligent, and natural; and never better than when his solid understanding was tried against the speculative playfulness of Jeffrey. They were cordial friends, and Jeffrey delighted especially to visit him, when in his country-gentleman condition, in his feudal tower of Tulliebole.

The Review had now gone on above six years, and its periodical appearance was looked for as that of the great exponent of what people should think on matters of taste and policy. No British journal had ever held such sway

* There was really great justice in the remark of a little old north country minister, who, proud both of himself as a member, and of the Reverend Baronet who was predominating in the Assembly, said to his neighbour, "Preserve me, Sir! hoo that man Sir Harry does go on! *He puts me in mind o' Jupiter among the lesser gods.*"

over the public mind. Nor had any one ever approached it in extent of circulation. Jeffrey's own contributions already amounted to seventy-nine articles, furnished to the twenty-six numbers that had been published; being on an average above one article every month. This was in addition to the vexatious labour of the editorship, and while struggling to encourage his professional practice, and amidst the distress of Mrs. Jeffrey's death, and a nearly constant immersion in society. Nor had he made his task easier by restricting it to a single department, or to few. Among these papers are profound and original disquisitions on many of the most difficult subjects, including metaphysics, politics, biography, morals, poetry, travels, political economy, and some physical science. His whole opinions and tastes were involved in these articles.

The journal was thus advancing with unexampled and unchecked success, when, in February, 1809, the Quarterly appeared. This was an era in the history both of the Edinburgh and of its conductor. The Quarterly was his first, and indeed throughout the whole of his editorship, his only formidable rival. It withdrew Scott from his allegiance to the original work; and it established a receptacle for the contributions of those, against whom, from its opinions, the Edinburgh Review was closed.

It used to be said that the new journal was an unwilling result of the dangerous principles of the previous one, chiefly on the war, and on domestic reform. Its various other offences might have been forgiven; but, engaged as we were in a struggle for existence, there could be no toleration for a work which eagerly obstructed government by inflaming discontent at home, and encouraged our foreign enemy, and dispirited the people, by perpetual demonstrations of the impossibility of our succeeding in the vital conflict. The provocation given by years of this misconduct was said to have been so aggravated by an article published in October, 1808, on an account given by Don

Pedro Cevallos, of the French usurpations in Spain, that neither patience nor friendship could endure it longer ; and that, therefore, the incorrigible journal was debarred, as it occasionally had been before (but always to the increase of its circulation), from the houses of some of its usual readers,* and a work on more patriotic principles was resolved on. Mr. Jeffrey, it is added, had been warned of the consequence of his rashness, and was himself so sensible of improprieties to which he had at least been accessory, that he had actually engaged to Sir Walter Scott “*that no party politics should appear again in his Review.*”—(Letter from Scott to George Ellis, Dec., 1808, in Lockhart’s Life of Scott, vol. ii. p. 219.)

There is some truth in all this, and much error.

The statement by Sir Walter implies so serious a charge, that the moment it appeared several of Jeffrey’s friends advised him to contradict it, if it was incorrect. But he thought that the idea of his having engaged, after party politics had been the right leg of the Review for above six years, that there should be no more party politics in it, and then continuing to put as much of them into it as ever, was so strange that no body could fail to ascribe it to mistake ; and, therefore, he allowed it to remain unanswered for seven years. But when he was writing the preface to the publication of his Selected Contributions, in the end of 1843, he thought that a natural opportunity of noticing it had occurred ; and he made a very graceful, and, towards Scott, a handsome explanation. Its substance is that Sir Walter must have misunderstood him ; probably by mistaking a

* The late Earl of Buchan, not a stupid, but a very vain and foolish man, made the door of his house in George Street be opened, and the Cevallos number be laid down on the innermost part of the floor of his lobby ; and then, after all this preparation, his lordship, personally, kicked the book out to the centre of the street, where he left it to be trodden into the mud ; which he had no doubt must be the fate of the whole work—after this open proof of his high disapprobation.

general expression of a desire to avoid *violent* politics, for a pledge to avoid all politics; or must have afterward expressed himself inaccurately in a hasty and familiar letter. There is no one who considers what the Review had been, and what it continued to be, and what Jeffrey's character was, to whom this explanation will not be satisfactory.

The article on Cevallos has been often ascribed to a different person; but it was written by Jeffrey. It raised a great outcry, which, however, was not owing to any particular guilt in that paper; for it is not worse than many that had gone before it; but it happened to be ill-timed. It dared to despair of what was then called the regeneration of Spain; and this at the very moment when most people's hearts were agitated with delight in the belief that this glorious change had already begun, and that the Peninsula was henceforth to be inhabited by a population of patriots. No one who doubted this could then be endured. But it was not this solitary article, however detestable, that produced the rival journal. The only wonder is, how it was not produced sooner. With the principles of the popular party so powerfully maintained in one publication, it was impossible that the principles of the opposite party could remain undefended by another. Had Don Pedro Cevallos never appeared, and had the subordinate indiscretions of the existing Review been all avoided, and had even its political matter been diluted down to insignificance, still, unless its public tone and doctrines had been positively reversed, or party politics altogether excluded, a periodical work in defence of Church, Tory, and War principles, must have arisen; simply because the defence of these principles required it. The defence was a consequence of the attack. And it is fortunate that it was so. For besides getting these opinions fairly discussed, the party excesses natural to any unchecked publication were diminished; and a work arose which, in many respects, is an honour to British lite-

rature, and has called out, and indirectly reared, a great variety of the highest order of talent.

Jeffrey's feelings on seeing the first number of his rival, were these,—“I have seen the Quarterly this morning. It is an inspired work, compared with the poor prattle of Cumberland. But I do not think it very formidable; and if it were not for our offences, I should have no fear about its consequences.” “Tell me what you hear, and what you think of this new Quarterly; and do not let yourself imagine that I feel any unworthy jealousy, and still less any unworthy fear on the occasion. My natural indolence would have been better pleased not to be always in sight of an alert and keen antagonist. But I do rejoice at the prospect of this kind of literature, which seems to be more and more attended to than any other, being generally improved in quality, and shall be proud to have set an example.”—(To Horner, 4th March, 1809.)

The favourite imputation, that the politics of the Edinburgh Review were all merely intended to facilitate the return of the Whigs to power, in so far as it was meant to impute dishonesty or factiousness to its conductor, are amply refuted by the knowledge of all his friends of his disinterested sincerity, and of the fact that on many occasions he gave great offence, when he thought it his duty to do so, to his own party. Upon the two great points of the war, and of that Whiggism which urged the due cultivation of the people, he has recorded his conviction of the hopelessness of the one and the necessity of the other, in one or two of his letters.

“I must say that a temperate, firm, and enlightened article on Spain, would, of all other things, be the most serviceable and restorative to us at this crisis. I cannot indeed comprehend your grounds of hope. But the public will; and I am willing enough to be enlightened. At all events, something gravely and soberly said upon this topic would be quite medicinal in this stage of the malady. I am

really anxious to see some grounds of comfort for my own sake. For my honest impression is, that Bonaparte will be in Dublin in about fifteen months ; perhaps sooner. And then if I survive, I shall try to go to America. I hate despotism and insolence so much, that I could bear a great deal, rather than live here under Frenchmen, and such wretches as will at first be employed by them.”—(To Horner, 29th December, 1808.)

“ I still hanker after peace, chiefly I own out of fear, and out of despair ; not very noble motives either of them, but pretty powerful, and well calculated to have weight with the prudent. I do in my heart think that we are in very considerable danger of losing Ireland within eighteen months ; and then how is England to be kept ? Or would it be worth keeping by the present generation, at the expense of all the bloodshed, and treachery, and guilt, and misery, which the struggle would produce ? Then, as to foreign affairs, I own I make up my mind to see every thing subdued by France on the Continent ; and therefore I do not agree with you that any new usurpation or plans of conquest there should be allowed to break a peace once concluded with England. Indeed, our interference is likely enough to exasperate, and accelerate, and afford a sort of apology in future, as it has done in past times. The beneficial chances of peace are obvious ; and I would rather take them, with all the hazards, than persist in our present downward course.”—(To Horner, 25th January, 1811.)

Then, as to home politics, his opinions were in substance just those of the Whig party ; but with this material qualification, that he was one of those who always thought that even the Whigs were disposed to govern too much through the influence of the aristocracy, and through a few great aristocratical families without making the people a direct political element. He stated this view in the following letter to Mr. Horner, 26th October, 1809. “ In the main, I think our opinions do not differ very widely ;

and, in substance and reality, you seem to me to admit all that I used to contend with you about. In the first place, you admit now that *there is* a spirit of discontent, or disaffection, if you choose to call it so, among the people, which must be managed and allayed, in some way or other, if we wish to preserve tranquillity. And, in the next place, you admit that the leading Whigs belong to the aristocracy, and have been obliged to govern themselves a great deal by the necessity of managing this aristocracy. Now, all I say is, that there is a radical contest and growing struggle between the aristocracy and the democracy of this country; and agreeing entirely with you, that its freedom must depend in a good measure on their coalition, I still think that the aristocracy is the weakest, and ought to give way, and that the blame of the catastrophe will be heaviest on those who provoke a rupture by maintaining its pretensions. When I said I had no confidence in Lord Grey or Grenville, I meant no more than that I thought them too aristocratical, and consequently, likely to be inefficient. They will never be trusted by the Court, nor cordial with the Tories; and, I fear, unless they think less of the aristocracy and its interests and prerogatives, they will every day have less influence with the people.

“I have no doubt of their individual honour and integrity, and am disposed to think highly of their talents. You ask too much of the people when you ask them to have great indulgence for the ornaments and weaknesses of refined life. You should consider what a burdensome thing Government has grown; and into what dangers and difficulties they have been led by trusting implicitly to those refined rulers. As long as they are suffering and angry, they will have no indulgence for these things; and every attempt to justify or uphold them will be felt as an insult. I still think our greatest immediate hazard is from without. But I differ from you still more in your opinion that we are more in danger of falling under a military tyranny through

the common course of internal tumult and disorder, than of having our present Government consolidated into something a good deal like despotism without any stir. The very same want of virtue which makes all popular commotion likely to end in military tyranny, gives reason to fear for the result of a passive obedience on one hand, and bad, unprincipled measures, on the other. Unless something be done, or happen, to conciliate, one or other of the parties will come to act in a decided manner by and by. I own to you, that with the government in the hands of Wellesleys and Melvilles, and with the feeling that something vigorous *must* be hazarded, I should rather expect to see the Habeas Corpus Act suspended—Cobbett and the Edinburgh Review prosecuted—newspapers silenced—and all the common harbingers of tyranny sent out, than to witness any alarming symptoms of popular usurpation and violence. The same cause, however, promises to avert both disasters. The people are both stronger, and wiser, and more discontented than those who are not the people will believe. Let the true friends of liberty and the constitution join with the people, assist them to ask, with dignity and with order, all that ought to be granted, and endeavour to withhold them from asking more. But for both purposes let them be gracious and cordial with them, and not by distrust, and bullying, and terror, exasperate them, and encourage the Court party to hazard a contest that will be equally fatal, however it issue.* I thank you very gratefully for all you promise to do for the Review. I hope you will go a little beyond the mere examination of the translation, and say something still of Fox, or of the French, or of other countries that could never produce such a character."

In judging of this and all his writings, we must remember

* See a letter with the same views to Mr. Horner, in Horner's Memoirs, ii. 10, and No. 30, art. 15, of the Review where the same view is taken, and is expressed in the same spirit.

the rule under which he cautioned Horner that they must be read. (13th August, 1809.)—“I have done a very long rambling thing on parliamentary reform ; in which I think there are some inaccuracies, and some positions you will think false ; but I beg you to judge it, as I fear you must judge all that I say or write, by the whole *broad effect and honest meaning*, without keeping me to points or phrases, or making me answer for exaggerations. I wrote it while they were printing, and have no anxiety except for your judgment, and that of about three other persons.”

These opinions may have been all unsound, and consequently dangerous ; but there was surely nothing in them that could make any person of candour impute what he may think the mischievous doctrines of the Review to wickedness, on the part of either its conductor or its contributors.

The number which had appeared in January, 1808, contained the criticism on Lord Byron’s Hours of Idleness (No. 22, art. 2), which his Lordship declares had inflamed him into “rage, resistance, and redress.” Accordingly, in March, 1809, he exploded in his English Bards and Scotch Reviewers ; which wastes its fiercest and most contemptuous bitterness on Jeffrey, whom he believed to have been the author of the offensive article. But he was wrong in this opinion, for it was written by a different person. It would be idle to answer any thing contained in a satire which its author himself came to describe as a “*ferocious rhapsody*,” and “*a miserable record of misplaced anger and indiscriminate acrimony*.” He afterward did justice to Jeffrey both as a man and a critic, and even told the world of him,—“*you have acted on the whole most nobly.*”—(Don Juan, 10, 16.)

In May, 1810, he removed from Queen Street, and went, after about ten years’ residence in upper floors, to a small house occupied entirely by himself, in No. 92 George Street, where he passed the next seventeen years.

During the summer of 1810, he was very unwell; for which he roamed for nearly two months over England and Wales.

In the spring of 1811 he was in London, and saw more of its society than he had yet done. In the autumn he took another journey to the north of Scotland.

His professional employment was now widening so steadily, as to make it evident that, if he persevered, the pinnacles of the law were not beyond his reach. I wish it was possible for me to do justice to the more eminent competitors with whom he had the satisfaction and the honour to be engaged. But they are too numerous, and, except as lawyers, many of them are too unknown to be generally interesting. There are three, however, of his principal rivals who cannot be passed by.

John Clerk, son of Clerk of Eldin, (a man whose science and originality, whether he first propounded the modern system of naval tactics or not, were far above that idea,) had been Solicitor-General under the Whig Government of 1805 and 1806, and had since risen into great practice. It is difficult to describe a person whose conditions in repose and in action, that is, in his private and in his professional life, almost amounted to the possession of two natures.

A contracted limb, which made him pitch when he walked, and only admitted of his standing erect by hanging it in the air, added to the peculiarity of a figure with which so many other ideas of oddity were connected. Blue eyes, very bushy eyebrows, coarse grizzly hair, always in disorder, and firm, projecting features, made his face and head not unlike that of a thorough-bred shaggy terrier. It was a countenance of great thought and great decision.

Had his judgment been equal to his talent, few powerful men could have stood before him. For he had a strong, working, independent, ready head; which had been improved by various learning, extending beyond his profession into the fields of general literature, and into the arts of

painting and sculpture. Honest, warm-hearted, generous, and simple, he was a steady friend, and of the most touching affection in all the domestic relations. The whole family was deeply marked by an hereditary caustic humour, and none of its members more than he.

These excellences, however, were affected by certain peculiarities, or habits, which segregated him from the whole human race.

One of these was an innocent admiration both of his own real merits and achievements, and of all the supposed ones which his simplicity ascribed to himself. He was saved from the imputation of vanity in this, by the sincerity of the delusion. Without any boasting or airs of superiority, he would expatiate on his own virtues with a quiet placidity, as if he had no concern in the matter, but only wished others to know what they should admire. This infantine self-deification would have been more amusing, had it not encouraged another propensity, the source of some of his more serious defects—an addiction, not in words merely, but in conduct, to paradox. He did not announce his dogmas, like the ordinary professors of paradox, for surprise or argument, but used to insist upon them with a calm, slow, dogged obstinacy, which at least justified the honesty of his acting upon them. And this tendency was aggravated, in its turn, by a third rather painful weakness; which, of all the parts in his character, was the one which his friends would have liked most to change,—jealousy of rivalship, and a kindred impatience of contradiction. This introduced the next stage, when confidence in his own infallibility ascribed all opposition to doubts of his possessing this quality, and thus inflamed a spirit which, however serene when torpid, was never trained to submission, and could rise into fierceness when chafed.

Of course it was chafed every moment at the bar; and accordingly it was there that his other and inferior nature appeared. Every consideration was lost in eagerness for

the client, whose merit lay in this, that he has relied upon me, John Clerk. Nor was his the common zeal of a counsel. It was a passion. He did not take his fee, plead the cause well, hear the result, and have done with it; but gave the client his temper, his perspiration, his nights, his reason, his whole body and soul, and very often the fee to boot. His real superiority lay in his legal learning and his hard reasoning. But he would have been despicable in his own sight had he reasoned without defying and insulting the adversary and the unfavourable judges; the last of whom he always felt under a special call to abuse, because they were not merely obstructing justice, but thwarting him. So that pugnacity was his line. His whole session was one keen and truceless conflict; in which more irritating matter was introduced than could have been ventured upon by any one except himself, whose worth was known, and whose intensity was laughed at as one of the shows of the court.

Neither in speaking, nor in any thing else, was he at all entangled with the graces; but his manner was always sensible and natural. An utterance as slow as minute guns, and a poor diction, marked his unexcited state, in one of his torpid moods. But when roused, which was his more common condition, he had the command of a strong, abrupt, colloquial style, which, either for argument or for scorn, suited him much better than any other sort of eloquence would have done. Very unequal, no distinguished counsel made so many bad appearances. But then he made many admirable ones, and always redeemed himself out of the bad ones by displays of great depth and ability. And his sudden rallies when, after being refuted and run down, he stood at bay, and either covered his escape or died scalping, were unmatched in dexterity and force. A number of admirable written arguments on profound legal difficulties, will sustain his reputation in the sight of every lawyer who will take the very useful trouble of instructing himself

by the study of these works. It was his zeal, however, which of all low qualities is unfortunately the one that is most prized in the daily market of the bar, that chiefly upheld him when in his glory ; and as this fiery quality must cool with age, he declined some years before he withdrew.

His popularity was increased by his oddities. Even in the midst of his phrenesies he was always introducing some original and quaint humour ; so that there are few of the lights of the court of whom more sayings and stories are prevalent. Even in his highest fits of disdainful vehemence, he would pause,—lift his spectacles to his brow,—erect himself,—and after indicating its approach by a mantling smile, would relieve himself, and cheer the audience by some diverting piece of Clerkism,—and then, before the laugh was well over, another gust would be up. He and his consulting room withdrew the attention of strangers from the cases on which they had come to hear their fate. Walls covered with books and pictures, of both of which he had a large collection ; the floor encumbered by little ill-placed tables, each with a piece of old china on it ; strange boxes, bits of sculpture, curious screens and chairs, cats and dogs, (his special favourites,) and all manner of trash, dead and living, and all in confusion ;—John himself sitting in the midst of this museum,—in a red worsted night-cap, his crippled limb resting horizontally on a tripod stool,—and many pairs of spectacles and antique snuff-boxes on a small table at his right hand ; and there he sits,—perhaps dreaming awake,—probably descanting on some of his crotchetts ; and certainly abusing his friends the judges,—when recalled to the business in hand ; but generally giving acute and vigorous advice.

Except in his profession, and as an ardent partisan, he was little of a public character. Resolute in his Whig principles, which he delighted to shake in the face of his adversaries during the fulness of their power, and entering hotly into all the movements of his party, inexperience of

public management, and some impracticability, disqualified him from originating measures, and occasionally made him a little dangerous even as their defender. In these matters, indeed, his friends could not have the confidence in his judgment, which friends would have liked to have had in one so upright, and with so muscular a mind.

Jeffrey and he did excellently together; for even in opposition, Jeffrey managed him better than most other people could. He respected his worth and talent; and whenever Clerk exceeded his allowed (and pretty large) measure of provocation, no one could so easily torment him in return, chiefly by the levity with which Clerk's coarser blows were received.

James Moncrieff, a son of Sir Harry, and worthy of the name, was more remarkable for the force than for the variety of his powers. His faculties, naturally, could have raised and sustained him in almost any practical sphere. But, from his very outset, he devoted himself to the law as the great object of his ambition. The politics of the Scotch Whig party, and the affairs of that Presbyterian Church which he revered, occupied much of his attention throughout life; but even these were subordinate to the main end of rising, by hard work, in his profession.

This restriction of his object had its necessary consequences. Though excellently educated at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Oxford, he left himself little leisure for literary culture; and, while grounded in the knowledge necessary for the profession of a liberal lawyer, he was not a well-read man. Without any of his father's dignified air, his outward appearance was rather insignificant; but his countenance was marked by a pair of firm, compressed lips, denoting great vigour and resolution. The peculiarity of his voice always attracted attention. In its ordinary state it was shrill and harsh; and casual listeners, who only heard it in that state, went away with the idea that it was never any thing else. They never heard him admonish a pri-

soner, of whom there was still hope ; or doom one to die ; or spurn a base sentiment ; or protest before a great audience on behalf of a sacred principle. The organ changed into striking impressiveness, whenever it had to convey the deep tones of that solemn earnestness which was his eloquence. Always simple, direct, and practical, he had little need of imagination ; and one so engrossed by severe occupation and grave thought, could not be expected to give much to general society by lively conversation. With his private friends he was always cheerful and innocently happy.

In the midst of these negative qualities, there were three positive ones which made him an admirable and very formidable person—great power of reasoning ; unconquerable energy ; and the habitual and conscientious practice of all the respectable and all the amiable virtues.

Though a good thinker, not quick, but sound, he was a still better arguer. His reasoning powers, especially as they were chiefly seen concentrated on law, were of the very highest order. These, and his great legal knowledge, made him the best working counsel in court. The intensity of his energy arose from that of his conscientiousness. Every thing was a matter of duty with him, and therefore he gave his whole soul to it. Jeffrey called him the whole duty of man. Simple, indifferent, and passive when unyoked, give him any thing professional or public to perform, and he fell upon it with a fervour which made his adversaries tremble, and his friends doubt if it was the same man. One of his cures for a headache was to sit down and clear up a deep legal question. With none, originally, of the facilities of speaking which seem a part of some men's nature, zeal, practice, and the constant possession of good matter, gave him all the oratory that he required. He could in words unravel any argument however abstruse, or disentangle any facts however complicated, or impress any audience with the simple and serious

emotions with which he dealt. And, for his purpose, his style, both written and spoken, was excellent—plain, clear, condensed, and nervous.

Thus, the defect lay in the narrowness of the range; the merit in his force within it. Had it not been for his known honesty, his inflexible constancy of principle, and the impossibility of his doing any thing without stamping the act with the impression of his own character, he would have been too professional for public life. But zeal and purity are the best grounds of public influence; and accordingly, in Edinburgh, or wherever he was known, the mere presence of James Moncrieff satisfied people that all was right.

I am not aware how his moral nature could have been improved. A truer friend, a more upright judge, or a more affectionate man, could not be.

His love of the church was not solely hereditary. He himself had a strong Presbyterian taste, and accordingly both the Whiggism and the grave piety of what was called the *wild* side of the church were entirely according to his heart. He was almost the only layman on that side who used regularly to attend to the proceedings of the old General Assembly, and to influence them. It was a sad day for him when he thought it his duty to renounce that community, as he was certain that his father would have done; and to adhere to what he thought its ancient and genuine principles in the Free Church. He mourned over the necessity with the sorrow of a mother weeping for a dead child.

His attachment to his political principles was equally steady and pure. He owned them in his youth, and they clung to him through life. The public meeting in 1795, for attending which, Henry Erskine was turned out of the deanship, was held in the Circus, which their inexperience at that time of such assemblages had made them neglect to take any means to light, and Erskine was obliged to

begin his speech in the dark. A lad, however, struggled through the crowd with a dirty tallow candle in his hand, which he held up, during the rest of the address, before the orator's face. Many shouts honoured the unknown torch-bearer. This lad was James Moncrieff, then about sixteen. The next time that he recollects being in that place, which had changed its name, was when he presided at what is known here as the Pantheon Meeting in 1819. He died in the political faith in which he had lived; never selfish, or vindictive, or personal; never keeping back, but never pushing forward; and always honouring his party and his cause by the honesty and resolute moderation of all his sentiments.

Jeffrey had the greatest regard for this most excellent man. On the 22d of November, 1826, Moncrieff was raised by his brethren of the bar to be their Dean. Some thought that Jeffrey who, besides other things, was his senior, had a better claim. But he put this down peremptorily, insisting that Moncrieff held, and deserved to hold, a higher professional position; and declaring that, at any rate, he would have more gratification in his friend's elevation than in his own. He accordingly seconded Moncrieff's nomination. Many a tough bar battle had they. But this only tightened the bands of their social lives. In their judicial conflicts, Moncrieff had the advantage in hard law, Jeffrey in general reasoning and in legal fancy.

He died on the 30th of March, 1851.

George Cranstoun, with rather a featureless countenance, had a pleasing and classical profile. With a deadly paleness, a general delicacy of form, and gentlemanlike though not easy manners, the general air indicated elegance, thought, and restraint. His knowledge of law was profound, accurate, and extensive; superior perhaps, especially if due value be set on its variety, to that of every other person in his day. It embraced every branch of the science, feudal, mercantile, and Roman; constitutional

and criminal; the system not of his own country alone, but, in its more general principles, the jurisprudence of Europe. No great, though new, question could occur, on which he was not, or could not soon make himself at home. His legal loins were always girt up; and his law was dignified by a respectable acquaintance with classical and continental literature, and a very considerable knowledge of the literature of Britain. Except two or three casual (and rather elaborate) levities, he wrote nothing but the legal arguments in which the court was then so much addressed. His style in this line was so clear and elegant, that there can be no doubt that it would have sustained higher matter. His speaking was anxiously precise; while ingenious law, beautiful reasoning, and measured diction gave every professional speech, however insignificant the subject, the appearance of a finished thing. It was not his way to escape from details by general views. He built up his own argument, and demolished that of his adversary, stone by stone. There are few in whose hands this system could have avoided being tedious. But he managed it with such brevity in each part, and such general neatness and dexterity, that of all faults tediousness was the one of which he was freest. He could not be forcible, and was too artificial to be moving, and therefore avoided the scenes where these qualities are convenient. His appropriate line was that of pure law, set off by elegance, reasoning, and learning. His taste was delicate, but not always sound, particularly on matters of humour, which his elaboration seldom gave fair play. He no doubt felt the humour of others, and had humorous conceptions of his own. But when he tried to give one of them to the public, the preamble and the point were so anxiously conned and polished, that the principal pleasure of the audience, when they saw the joke on the stocks, consisted in their watching the ingenious care with which it was to be launched.

The defect of the whole composition was a want of nature. To a very few of the kernels of his friendships he was reported to be not incapable of relapsing into ease. But those less favoured, and his general acquaintance, were oppressed by his systematic ceremony. He shrank so into himself, that those who did not understand the thing were apt to suppose him timid and indifferent to common distractions. But he was exactly the reverse. His opinions and feelings, both of persons and of matters, were decided and confident ; in forming them he was entirely free from the errors that spring from undue admiration or enthusiasm ; and behind a select screen they were sometimes freely disclosed. But the very next moment, if before the world, the habitual mask, which showed nothing but diffidence and fastidious retirement, was never off. He would have been far more powerful and popular, could he have been but artless. His exposition of law was matchless ; and he sometimes touched the right moral chord, but not always on the right key. The disposition to get into the region of exquisite art ; to embellish by an apt quotation ; to explain by an anecdote ; to drop his distinctly uttered and polished words, one by one, like pearls into the ear, —adhered to him too inseparably.

Though a decided Whig, for which he suffered professional proscription for several years, it was chiefly by his character that he did good to his party. Retired habits and the unfortunate ambition of perfection excluded his practical usefulness. With no indecision of principle, and no public indifference, though with considerable distaste of popular vulgarity, it was beneath George Cranstoun ever to come forward but on a great occasion, and with a display of precise, unchallengeable excellence. This was not the man for plain public work, and accordingly he very rarely undertook it.

His and Jeffrey's professional struggles were often very amusing. He undervalued what he thought Jeffrey's igno-

rance of correct law; Jeffrey made game of the technical accuracy of his learned brother. A black letter judge agreed with the one; the world admired the other. Each occasionally tried the other's field. But in these encroachments the advantage was generally on the side of Jeffrey; who, with due preparation, could more certainly equal the law of Cranstoun, than Cranstoun could the ingenuity or the brilliant illustration of Jeffrey. The one was in books; the other in the man.

About the close of 1810, Mons. Simond, a French gentleman, who had left his country early in the revolution, came with his wife and a niece to visit some friends in Edinburgh, where they remained some weeks. Mad. Simond was a sister of Charles Wilkes, Esq., banker in New York, a nephew of the famous John; and the niece was Miss Charlotte Wilkes, a daughter of this Charles. It was during this visit, I believe, that she and Jeffrey first met.

In 1812 he became the tenant of Hatton, about nine miles west of Edinburgh, where he passed the summer of that and of the two succeeding years. The Moreheads and their family lived with him there in 1812 and 1813. It had formerly been a seat of the Lauderdalees, by whom the mansion had been built, and the grounds laid out, prior to the close of the seventeenth century. In its original condition,—with its shaded avenues, its terraces, fountains, garden sculpture, shrubs, and its lawns,—it must have been a stately and luxurious place. But by 1812, time and neglect had made great changes. The house was still habitable for a family disposed to be contented; and the gardens retained the charms which can scarcely be taken from the grounds brightened by healthy evergreens. The balustrades, however, were broken; the urns half buried; the fountains had ceased to play; and there was such general decay and disorder, that one of the interests consisted in fancying how well it must have looked when it was all entire.

This was the first country residence that Jeffrey ever had of his own. He enjoyed it exceedingly. It was the beginning of that half town and half villa life which he ever afterward led. He kept no carriage then of any kind; but rode out as often as he could; which, during the vacations of the court, was every day; and, besides ordinary visitors, no Saturday could pass without a special party of his friends. But his best happiness at Hatton arose from its quiet, and the opportunities it gave him of making the Moreheads happy, and of prattling with the children.

One of his fancies for several years, both before and after this, was to run for a few days to some wild solitude, in the very depth of winter. “I am (to Horner, 5th January, 1813) just returned from the top of Ben-Lomond, where I had two shots at an eagle on New Year’s Day. Is not that magnificent? and far better than special pleading, or even electioneering, which I hope was your employment about the same time. The weather was beautiful, only not quite wintry enough for my project of getting a peep of a true Alpine scene, or rather, to confess the truth, a living image of St. Preux’s frozen haunts at Meillerie. I have not done with Rousseau yet, you see, and find infinite consolation in him in all seasons. I cannot say that I feel my taste for business and affairs increase at all as I grow older; and, therefore, I suppose it is that I retain almost all my youthful interest in other occupations.”

His acquaintance with Miss Wilkes had ripened into a permanent attachment, which it was at one time thought would have ended in a marriage in England. Her father was an Englishman, but had been several years resident in America; and when his daughter was here, there was a scheme of their all returning to settle in this country. This plan had been given up, however, and the bride being established again on the other side of the Atlantic, it became necessary that he should earn her by going there. Accordingly, in spring, 1813, he actually resolved to do so;

which may be considered as one of the greatest achievements of love. For of all strong-minded men, there never was one who, from what he deemed a just estimate of its dangers, but in truth from mere nervous horror, recoiled with such sincerity from all watery adventures. No matter whether it was a sea that was to be crossed, or a lake, or a stream, or a pond. It was enough that he had to be afloat. The discomforts of a voyage to America in 1813, before steam had shortened the way, and relieved it by every luxury enjoyable by a landsman at sea, were very great. To these were added the more material dangers connected with the war then subsisting between the two countries, and the almost personal passions under which it was conducted. But to him all these risks, including even that of detention, were immaterial. The sad fact was, that the Atlantic was not made of solid land.

However, his mind being made up, he set about it resolutely. His clients were left to their fate; the Review to Thomson and Murray, with promises of articles from some of its best contributors; and a will was deposited with George Joseph Bell, which conveyed all that he had to trustees for certain purposes. The trustees were four relations—"and my excellent friends Geo. J. Bell, John A. Murray, James Campbell, James Keay, and Robert Graeme." He desired them "to take and give to each of my trustees one or two dozen of claret from my cellar—and also a book, or picture, or piece of furniture—to drink and to keep in memory of me." Of these five, Mr. Murray and Mr. Bell have been already mentioned. Mr. Campbell (now of Craigie) and Mr. Graeme (now of Redgorton) continued to be his excellent friends to the end of his life. So did Mr. Keay, till he died in 1837—a person of great worth and judgment, and who had risen to a high station at the bar.

Having armed himself with all the official papers that could be got, and as many private recommendations as he

chose, he and his brother went to Liverpool, (May 1813) to find a ship. He was detained there a long while. But this showed him all the celebrated men of that place ; among others Roscoe, with whom he does not appear to have been struck. He returned to Edinburgh in July ; and at last, after many obstacles, set sail on the 29th of August in a cartel, “the ship full of visitors, and a monstrous music of cheering mariners, squeaking pigs, and crying children.”

Of course he kept a journal.

The sea does not begin to be abused till the third day, when it is thus dealt with—“No land in sight, and none expected till we see America. It is amazing how narrow and paltry the boundless sea looks when there are no high shores in sight to mark its boundaries ! I should think the eye does not reach more than seven miles of the surface at any time. To-day it seems not much larger than a Spanish dollar, and much of that complexion. Not a sail or any vestige of man since the ship of war left us. Man, indeed, has left no traces of himself on the watery part of the globe. He has stripped the land of its wood, and clothed it with corn and with cities ; he has changed its colour, its inhabitants, and all its qualities. Over it he seems, indeed, to have dominion ; but the sea is as wild and unsubdued as on the first day of its creation. No track left of the innumerable voyagers who have traversed it ; no powers over its movements, or over the winds by which they are influenced. It is just as desert and unaltered in all particulars as before its bed was created ; and would be, after his race was extinct. Neither time nor art make any alteration here. Continents are worn down and consolidated, and the forests grow up or rot into bog, by the mere lapse of ages ; but the great expanses of the ocean continue with the same surface and the same aspect for ever, and are, in this respect, the most perfect specimen of antiquity, and carry back the imagination the farthest into the dark abysses of time passed away.”

The experience of the first eleven days enabled him to understand the charms of a voyage, which are thus summed up: “Wednesday, 8th Sept., eight o’clock P. M.—For these last seven days I have not been able to write for violent gales and violent sea-sickness, head-winds and swimming head, the whole time almost; fierce south-west gales, which, with eternal motion and clamour, have not advanced us 200 miles on our course, and have given me a great idea of the pleasures of a voyage.—*Imprimis*, Oppressive and intolerable sickness, coldness, loathing, and vertigo. *Secundo*, Great occasional fear of drowning, and penitence for the folly of having come voluntarily in the way of it. *Tertio*, There is the impossibility of taking any exercise, and the perpetual danger of breaking your limbs, if you try to move from your chair to your bed, or even to sit still without holding. *Quarto*, An incessant and tremendous noise of the ship groaning and creaking, cracking and rattling; to say nothing of the hissing of the wind, and the boiling and bubbling of the sea. *Quinto*, The eternal contact of the whole crew, whom you hear, see, feel, and smell, by day and by night, without respite or possibility of escape; crying children, chattering Frenchmen, prosing captain, and foolish women, all with you for ever, and no means of getting out of their hearing. *Sexto*, The provoking uncertainty of your fate, never going 150 miles in one day on your way, and then taking seven days to 100; the agreeable doubt whether your voyage is to last three weeks or three months. *Septimo*, The horrid cooking and the disgusting good appetites of those who are used to it. *Octavo*, The uniformity and narrowness of your view, and its great ugliness. There might be twenty more items, but these are enough; and in consideration of these alone, I think I shall make a covenant with myself, that if I get back safe to my own place from this expedition, I shall never willingly go out of sight of land again in my life. There is nothing so ugly or mean as the sea in roughish

weather. The circuit very narrow, the elevations paltry, and all the forms ungraceful and ignoble. It looks like a nasty field deformed with heaps of rubbish, half shovelled and half frozen; and then the total want of vegetable odour, or variety, or any local association, makes it still more uninteresting. The sunsets are sometimes magnificent, but rather gloomy and terrible; deep recesses of glowing pillars and awful prison gates of red-hot clouds, with sunbeams issuing from their cavities, and spreading an angry and awful light on the waters."

However, he was sometimes consoled by a capacity of vulgar enjoyment. "We killed a pig last night, and made mock turtle soup of his head to-day. Miss — makes us excellent puddings and pies every day, and if my sickness keeps off, I am in danger of getting a habit of gormandizing."

"I have lived (he says on the 10th of September) so constantly with people I loved, and had full and cordial intimacy with, that it is always quite overwhelming to me to be left, for any length of time, with those to whom I can feel neither familiarity nor affection. I have endeavoured to cure this feeling by almost entirely occupying myself with recollections and anticipations, and giving such dimensions to the past and future as to make the present of little importance. This exercise of the imagination is very delightful, though a little wearing out; but if the weather continue fine, I shall get on very well with it."

And so he does, for there follows this picture of a day at Hatton. "Now they are shooting partridges amidst the singing reapers, and by the side of inland brooks in Scotland; and the leaves are growing brown on my Hatton beeches, and the uplands are purple in their heath, and the air is full of fragrant smell, and the voices of birds; and Tuckey's* eyes are glittering wild with joy, and every hour

* *Tuckey* was his nickname for one of Morehead's little girls.

is bringing some new face and some new thing to the happy dwellers in those accessible scenes. While here, there is the eternal barrenness of the water, and the hissing of the winds, and the same unvarying band of fellow prisoners, and eternal longing for a termination that is altogether uncertain. But it will come in some shape or other."

And a Sunday there is thus recalled. "Sunday 12th, two o'clock.—Calm, calm, oppressively and relentlessly calm, since seven o'clock this morning, and likely enough, from all appearances, to continue so. An enchanting day, too, if we could be on shore; warm, still, and glorious, with bright frothy clouds and sighing airs; enough to rustle leaves and fan the brows of fatigue; but here only flapping our sails and spreading the nauseous smell of our pork boiling all over the ship. There is nothing so sweet to my imagination as a bright calm Sunday in the early part of autumn; gilding with its temperate splendour the yellow fields and holy spires, and carrying on its still and silent air the soothing sounds that fall and expire in that mild pause of labour; lowing oxen, bleating sheep, and crowing cocks, heard from farm to farm, through the clear air; and even the wood pigeons and roosting crows resounding through far groves; and the distant tinkling of bells, and the slow groups wandering from church, and the aspect of peace, and plenty, and reflection, that meets the eyes on all sides. At sea, however, there is nothing but a wearisome glare, and a sickening heave of the water, and fretting, and gloom, and impatience."

The next Sunday revives similar associations. "Sunday, 19th September, eight o'clock.—I have been thinking all day of my sweet leisure autumn Sundays at Hatton last year; my early walks in the calm sunshine of the morning; my gray stairs, with the dewy flowers beside me; and Tuckey's cherub voice and glittering eyes; my languid reading, and careless talking all the morning; my little contemplative trot before dinner; our airy tea drinkings,

with the open windows, and the swallows skimming past them ; our long twilight social walks ; Tuckey's undressing, prayers, and slumbers ; my butter milk potations, quiet bed-readings, and gazing on the soft moon that shone in upon my slumbers through the ever open windows. What a contrast my last three Sundays have afforded to this simple but happy life ! To console myself, I am obliged to look forward to New York, and make a rival picture of peace and love there. Fancy, though, is less tranquil and sure in her work than memory."

The twenty-third day appears to have been a heavy one. But he seems to set this down partly to the "indefinite delay of all that is most interesting in existence,"—which, I suppose, means the bridegroom's impatience. "Monday, 20th Sept., eight o'clock.—Another weary, melancholy day; not very heroically borne. Calm, dead oppressive calm, almost without intermission from this time last night till now. Two lovely evenings too ; and the day so balmy, bland, and tranquil, as ought to have made it a pleasure to exist merely. But it was not ; for I languished so for the scenes where it would have been a pleasure, and felt such impatience to reach that end of the tedious way, that I have been substantially wretched and shamefully low. If I thought it could have done me any good, I could, with great good-will, have crept into a corner and cried. The sky was beautiful. A light varied dome of gray clouds resting on a zone of brighter silver, all wrought over like embossed silver, with a raised pattern of darker clouds ; and the sea shining below like a vast pavement, or a molten sea in the temple of Solomon. This evening, again, the sunset was magnificent, when he descended from the more solid canopy, and looked through the horizontal rim ; and then, after he went down, the stars shone out with such dewy softness and summer sweetness, and the south wind breathed so low and gently, that I almost fancied that I could smell the orange and myrtle groves of the Western

Islands, (they are not above 200 miles off, I take it,) and hear their piping shepherds, and goats bleating on their twilight rocks. The picture of Hatton, though, and my sweet summer evenings in those less romantic shades soon spoiled that picture, and my usual regret and impatience returned."

The only thing like a gale that relieved their monotony was too slight to raise his respect for the ocean. "Tuesday, 21st Sept., evening.—We have had a real gale of wind to-day, for the first time, and it has neither made me sick nor terrified me. Moreover, it has carried us, I dare say, 130 miles on our course, and done us more good than all the winds and calms of the last five days. It began about three this morning, and waked us all before daybreak. Notwithstanding the splashing of the spray, I spent several hours on deck, and never saw an uglier scene; and, what is worse, ugly, I think, without being sublime or terrible. I fancy, however, I have a spite at the sea, for I cannot bring myself to think or speak of it without a certain contempt, as well as dislike. The sky was very dark, and the water blue black, with a little foam, and many broad spots of dirty green, where the swell had recently broke. For the mountain waves one reads about in descriptions, they seemed to me very poor, paltry little slopes, not more than twenty feet high, by about three times as much in breadth, tossing very irregularly, and all wrinkled or covered over their convexity in the direction of the gale. The only things that had a sort of dreary magnificence were some black-looking birds screaming through the mist, and a sort of smoking spray which the wind swept from the water, and kept hanging like a vapour all over its surface. We went very easily through this sea at the rate of better than seven miles an hour. If I had been in a little boat, or a crazy old ship, I dare say I should have been terrified; but as it was, the spectacle seemed to me very contemptible and paltry."

But on the 23d—"The sunset was most superb, from the astonishing variety of shades and colours. The sky was cloudy all round; at least four different layers of clouds, all broken and seen behind each other in different tints and degrees of glory, kindling and curling in the finest groups and perspective. At different moments, and at different quarters, I am sure it might have furnished a painter with a hundred skies, every one singularly rich and beautiful. A panorama of it, with the black flat sea brightened in various tints beneath, would have made a splendid exhibition."

They caught cod on the 26th, off Newfoundland; "huge victims, who seemed of a bulk worthy of the ocean." "There was something grand indeed, though very dreary, in watching the irregular heaves of the misty billows under the dark and heavy sky, and the wheeling of the innumerable birds that hovered in our wake to pick up the offal that our butchery threw overboard. This set some of the men upon a new sport, which it seems is common in these regions. They fastened a bit of fat upon a small hook, and let it float astern. The birds darted after it in crowds, and tore it from each other with clamour, till the hook fastened on one more voracious than the rest. They very soon caught four or five in this way; but as they confessed they were good for nothing, we persuaded them to give up that cruel pastime. The quickness of sight in these creatures is astonishing. Yesterday we threw out little bits of grease, not larger than a bean, and repeatedly saw them check and pounce upon it from a distance of many hundred yards. Their agility, and the force and ease of their motions, are beautiful; and I amused myself for a long time in watching them skim close along the smooth and misty water, now dipping one end of their long wings, and now the other, now soaring aloft, and then diving for a long time out of sight under water, and rising and cackling with joy and loquacity."

The 4th of October was the joyous day. "Land, ho!

such was the joyful cry that startled us about one o'clock from the mast-head, and immediately we were all on the rigging to gaze at it. In a few minutes, however, it was plain enough from the deck; stretching like a long, low, dark cloud along the bright edge of the horizon. It was then about ten miles off, but we neared it very fast, and soon distinguished woody hills, and coloured fields beneath, and a bright zone of white sand or gravel binding all the shore; and various villages and human dwellings scattered along the beach. Columbus himself could not be more delighted than I was at this discovery; and the sight of stationary dwellings sending up quiet smoke among the trees, and the spires of rustic churches, and deep brown shades, and all the common traces of human habitation and rustic life, came like a glimpse of paradise upon my famished eyes, and gave me a sense of refreshment and joy that I have not known since I left *Scotland*. The day was lovely and unclouded, and the appearance, however distant, of comfort and secure life, peasants eating apples and new bread, and drinking new milk under their own trees, appeared to me like the summit of human felicity. Unfortunately, however, we were indulged but with a very transient glimpse of those beauties."

They were not only not allowed to land at once, but for two or three days were in danger of being ordered to repair to a place about five hundred miles off. However, after much alarm and negotiation, the voyage, in so far as he was concerned, was brought to a close on its fortieth day. He and his brother were set ashore early on the morning of the 7th October; and that day "we made our way to Mr. Wilkes's, where I found the object of this tedious navigation."

He continued in America till the 22d of January, 1814. In November, after his marriage, he visited a few of the principal cities of the Union. But his journal, though minute, records nothing, even in his favourite lines of re-

flection and speculation, that would now interest others. He appears to have seen many important people, and to have been very kindly received. He had two curious interviews, one with Mr. Monroe, the secretary, and one with Mr. Madison, the President; of which he gives a very striking account. He had a power of reporting what he heard, whether speeches or conversation, more fully and accurately than almost any other person trusting to memory alone. A conversation reported by Jeffrey, where he spoke confidently, was, in its substance, fully as correct, and nearly as fresh, as the original.

He had gone to the secretary to learn whether there was any hope of his obtaining a cartel for his return to Britain. After being promised every possible accommodation, the conversation was drawn on by Mr. Monroe to the war, its provocations, principles, and probable results; and particularly to the right claimed by England of searching American vessels for the recovery of British subjects. These were matters with which Jeffrey was probably as familiar as even the able and official person with whom he was talking; because the rights of neutrals had been more than once discussed in the Review, and in at least one article by Jeffrey himself; and, in so far as the right of searching *ships of war* for British deserters or subjects was involved, the principles there maintained were strongly against the English claim. But though not satisfied of the existence of the right claimed, he seems to have thought that it would be paltry not to stand by his country, before an enemy who had him in his power. Accordingly, he took the side of Britain during an animated, though politely conducted argument, which, after lasting a long time one day, was renewed the next.

After this, but on the same day, (18th November, 1813,) he had the honour of dining with the President, when he had another discussion with him. By the advice of the secretary, he took occasion, when he was about to retire,

to thank his excellency for the indulgence he had met with in the matter of the cartel. "This was received in a composed, civil way; and then his excellency proceeded to say that it was the wish of his government to set an example of the utmost liberality in every thing, and to prove to the world that nothing but absolute necessity should ever induce them to adopt those principles of warfare which had been directed against them. I said I trusted the English nation stood in need of no lessons in these particulars, and that in her present unfortunate hostilities with America, would show the same spirit of generosity which had distinguished even her most impolitic wars. He took up this a little warmly, and said that the way in which she had attacked the defenceless villages, threatened the citizens with the fate of traitors, and broken off the agreements entered into by their own agents as to the exchange of prisoners, did not say much for their spirit of generosity, and that the very pretence in which the war originated, the obstinacy and insolence with which all satisfaction had been refused, and the extraordinary form in which negotiation was ultimately offered, could leave little doubt on any impartial mind as to the temper by which it was carried on on the part of England. I was a little surprised at this sort of challenge to discussion, thrown out by a sovereign to a private individual in his own drawing-room. I felt, however, that it was not my part to decline it; and being somewhat *au fait* of the matter by my discussion with the secretary, I did not hesitate to accept. We entered accordingly upon a discussion which lasted nearly two hours, and embraced all the topics which I had gone over with Mr. M.; very nearly upon the same grounds, and to the same results; though maintained on the part of the President with rather more caution and reserve, more shyness as to concessions, and a tone considerably more acrimonious toward England; though perfectly civil, and even courteous to myself."

After repeating the substance of each of these conferences to Mr. Wilkes, as soon as they were over, and thus impressing it on his mind, he wrote it down, so that it is probably as correct and minute an account of three conversational discussions as it is possible ever to have. His defence of the general conduct of this country, both in the origin and in the conduct of the war, was manly and able; and, in so far as it depends on general reasoning, apart from the authority of jurists, who were not taken into council on either side, I doubt if the right of search was ever more powerfully maintained. Whatever the truth of the case may be, he had clearly the best of these arguments; though it be certain that those of his opponents do not suffer from his statement of them.

He left New York, on his homeward voyage, on the 22d of January, 1814, and reached Liverpool on the 10th of February. "Once more on British ground, and done, I hope for ever, with nautical journals." "I return to you (he tells Mrs. Morehead, in a letter of the 9th of February, while still on ship-board,) unchanged in every thing, and if possible, still more tenderly attached to Scotland, and all it contains, than ever." To which he adds next day on his landing: "Arrived once more on my own land." "Heaven bless you all,—and Tuckey above all; of whom you do not tell me one-half enough. I am quite feverish with joy at feeling myself again so near you, and never to be parted so far again."

He was very speedily established at home; with its rekindled light of domestic love. It would be presumptuous and indelicate to make the lady he brought among us a subject of public description. I shall only say that almost the whole happiness of his future life flowed from this union; and that Mrs. Jeffrey uniformly showed that she deserved the affection with which she inspired all his friends. Alas! it is easy to utter these words! But how inadequate are they to recall, vividly, what they are meant to

convey! The whole scene has passed away, and every hour weakens its impressions. The thirty-four years during which they were united have fled, and he and she are but remembered. Could we now feel over again the delights of a single day passed with them in the country, or of a single evening over their social fire, we would then know, better than we could when it was familiar, the depth of the natural and cheerful happiness which she diffused round her husband and his friends.

In his first letter to Horner after reaching home, (3d May, 1814,) he expresses his regret that he cannot, like everybody else, run over and see France; because, though strongly tempted, he could not move so soon again. “In the mean time I intend to cultivate the domestic virtues, and all manner of plants and flowers. I grow every day more sick of the necessity of working; and have serious thoughts of going into a cottage and living on £300 a year. Only it is rather too little, and I should like to have the means of moving about a little.” This makes a very good sentence in a letter; especially one addressed to a friend who was in no danger of being misled by it. But there was nothing less seriously in his mind at this time, even with a new wife, than retirement, and cottages, and £300 a year. He saw the bar now fairly open to him; and returned with increased alacrity to his professional, literary, and social pursuits.

When he had sailed for America, in August, 1813, the issue of the invasion of Russia by France was uncertain; and his fears being far stronger than his hopes, he had gone away with the gloomiest views of public affairs. By the time that he returned, the invading host was dissipated, and the war was miraculously ended, amidst events, and after experiences, which seemed to promise permanent peace to the world. He was astonished and delighted, and gave expression to his feelings in the very next article that he wrote for the Review; being that beautiful

one on “*The State and Prospects of Europe*,” (No. 45, art. 1;) to which, lest his predictions of a millennium should be refuted by circumstances not then existing, he gave the special date of the 5th of May, 1814. This was remarkable, he says, as the first occasion on which the Review and the whole public had ever been of one mind. “It would be strange indeed, we think, if pages, dedicated like ours to topics of present interest, and the discussions of the passing hour, should be ushered into the world at such a moment as this, without some stamp of that common joy and overwhelming emotion with which the wonderful events of the last three months are still filling all the regions of the earth. In such a situation it must be difficult for any one who has the means of being heard, to refrain from giving utterance to his sentiments. But to us, *whom it has assured, for the first time, of the entire sympathy of our countrymen*, the temptation we own is irresistible.” And then he goes on to the most beautiful, and the most intelligent, of all the many songs of triumph that poetry and oratory sang upon the novelty that had lightened every heart. “It had come upon the world like the balmy air and flushing verdure of a late spring, after the dreary chills of a long and interminable winter; and the refreshing sweetness with which it has visited the earth, feels like Elysium to those who have just escaped from the driving tempests it has banished.”

He had all along been too sincerely afraid of the war not to rejoice in its termination, without troubling himself about the principles or the objects of the powers by the success of whose troops it had been ended. There were philosophers, and even patriots, who saw nothing in Napoleon’s landing at Frejus except the acquiescence of a legitimately elected sovereign in a call by his subjects for his return from a state of compulsory banishment, to govern them; and in whose eyes the glory of Waterloo was dimmed by its being only a part of the scheme for imposing a go-

vernment on France by the force of foreign arms. The Review was open to the discussion of all such ideas; but Jeffrey's own opinion was clear, that a continuation of the war, and of Napoleon's military despotism, were the greatest of all immediate evils, and that whatever ended both ought to gratify reasonable men. I cannot discover any thing offensive in the Review about this time, either on this or on any other subject; but Mr. Horner seems to have condemned something which I suspect was connected with the Whigs and the allies, so strongly, as to have indicated an inclination to have no more to do with the work. This produced an admirable defence (12th March, 1815) by Jeffrey, both of his own conduct as editor, and of the principles on which any such work must necessarily be conducted. The letter is too long to be quoted here, but it is a sound and high-minded exposition, which cannot be read without admiration of his spirit and honour.*

Horner soon afterward (2d June, 1815) asked his opinion of the "new war," and blamed the allied attack on France. To this he received a plain answer; the substance of which was—"I am mortally afraid of the war, and I think that is all I can say about it. I hate Bonaparte, too, because he makes me more afraid than anybody else; and seems more immediately the cause of my paying income-tax, and having my friends killed by dysenteries and gunshot wounds, and making my country unpopular, bragging, and servile, and every thing that I do not wish it to be. I do think, too, that the risk was, and is, far more imminent and tremendous of the subversion of all national independence, and all peaceful virtues, and mild and generous habits, by his insolent triumph, than by the success of the most absurd of those who are allied against him."

He had left Hatton in the autumn of 1814, and in the spring of 1815 transferred his rural deities to Craigerook,

* Appendix.

where he passed all his future summers. It is on the eastern slope of Corstorphine Hill, about three miles to the north-west of Edinburgh. When he first became the tenant, the house was only an old *keep*, respectable from age, but inconvenient for a family; and the ground was merely a bad kitchen garden, of about an acre; all in paltry disorder. He immediately set about reforming. Some ill-placed walls were removed; while others, left for shelter, were in due time loaded with gorgeous ivy, and both protected and adorned the garden. A useful, though humble, addition was made to the house. And, by the help of neatness, sense, evergreens, and flowers, it was soon converted into a sweet and comfortable retreat. The house received a more important addition many years afterward; but it was sufficient without this for all that his family and his hospitalities at first required. But by degrees, that *earth hunger* which the Scotch ascribe to the possession of any portion of the soil, came upon him, and he enlarged and improved all his appurtenances. Two sides of the mansion were flanked by handsome bits of evergreened lawn. Two or three western fields had their stone fences removed, and were thrown into one, which sloped upward from the house to the hill, and was crowned by a beautiful bank of wood; and the whole place, which now extended to thirty or forty acres, was always in excellent keeping. Its two defects were, that it had no stream, and that the hill robbed the house of much of the sunset. Notwithstanding this, it was a most delightful spot; the best for his purposes that he could have found. The low ground, consisting of the house and its precincts, contained all that could be desired for secluded quiet and for reasonable luxury. The high commanded magnificent and beautiful views, embracing some of the distant mountains in the shires of Perth and Stirling, the near inland sea of the Frith of Forth, Edinburgh and its associated heights, and the green and peaceful nest of Craigcrook itself.

During the thirty-four seasons that he passed there, what a scene of happiness was that spot! To his own household it was all that their hearts desired. Mrs. Jeffrey knew the genealogy and the personal history and character of every shrub and flower it contained. It was the most favourite resort of his friends, who knew no such enjoyment as Jeffrey at that place. And, with the exception of Abbotsford, there were more interesting strangers there than in any house in Scotland. Saturday, during the summer session of the courts, was always a day of festivity; chiefly, but by no means exclusively, for his friends at the bar, many of whom were under general invitations. Unlike some barbarous tribunals which feel no difference between the last and any other day of the week, but moil on with the same stupidity through them all, and would include Sunday if they could, our legal practitioners, like most of the other sons of bondage in Scotland, are liberated earlier on Saturday; and the Craigerook party began to assemble about three, each taking to his own enjoyment. The bowling-green was sure to have its matches, in which the host joined with skill and keenness; the garden had its loiterers; the flowers, not forgetting the wall of glorious yellow roses, their worshippers; the hill, its prospect seekers. The banquet that followed was generous; the wines never spared; but rather too various; mirth unrestrained, except by propriety; the talk always good, but never ambitious; and mere listeners in no disrepute. What can efface these days, or indeed any Craigerook day, from the recollection of those who had the happiness of enjoying them?*

* A fictitious person of the name of Morris, (but who represents a real man, and a powerful writer,) and who, in *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, published in 1819, professes to describe Edinburgh and its neighbourhood, mentions, as if he had seen it, a Craigerook scene, where the whole party, including Mr. Playfair, who died in July, 1819, aged seventy-one, took off their coats and had a leaping match. As the liveliness and individuality of Dr. Morris's descriptions have made some of the simple

Horner wrote to him recommending the Baconian gardening.* To which he answers, (9th June, 1815,) “ I intended to have been heretical in the other way, and to have accused you of affectation, for professing an admiration of Bacon’s style of gardening. I am not for bold staring houses, and bare lawns, any more than you are. But really they are considerably more tolerable than a paltry wilderness of four square acres, or groves and arbours, ‘ or fair pillars of carpenters’ work ;’ and the truth is, that you durst no more make such a horrid Dutch Lust field, than you durst put on the quilted breeches and the high-crowned hat of the great philosopher. However, come to Craigm crook, and debate the matter manfully.”

In the autumn of this year, (1815,) he gratified his desire of seeing the Continent for the first time. The immediate temptation was, that he could have the company and the aid of Mons. Simond. Madame Simond remained with Mrs. Jeffrey at Craigm crook. In writing to Mr. Richardson for his passports, (14th September, 1815,) “ Can I do any thing for you where I am going ? I go, after all, with a heavy heart, and would rather stay at home. Nothing that I shall see abroad, I am sure, will give me half the pleasure of seeing my friends again upon my return ; and it is quite refreshing to think that I may have a peep of so many of them at Hampstead,† as I pass through London.”

Yet he was only away about a month ; having reached Rotterdam from Harwich on the 24th of September, and returned to Dover on the 25th of October. He ran through Holland and Flanders, seeing the common sights of galleries and curious towns ; and was above a fortnight in Paris. A full and minute journal details the proceedings of every

believe them to be all real, it may be as well to say that this is entirely a fancy piece. And, for so skilful a painter, it is not well fancied. It is totally unlike the Craigm crook proceedings, and utterly repugnant to all the habits of Mr. Playfair.

* See Horner’s Memoirs, ii. 249. † Where Mr. Richardson then lived.

day. These were interesting then, from the novelty of scenes that had been closed against the British traveller for nearly twenty-five years. But now that they are familiar to every one, there is no particular attraction in the statement of even Jeffrey's observations and impressions. To himself, at the time, it was their novelty that chiefly struck him ; and he calls what he was writing a mere traveller's guide-book. Though lively and descriptive, it is not worth quoting. One of the few reflections that he makes was at Waterloo: "Half of the ground is now ploughed up ; and except the broken trees and burnt offices at Hougmont, there is nothing to mark the scene of so much havoc and desolation. The people are ploughing and reaping, and old men following their old occupations, in their old fields, as if 60,000 youths had not fallen to manure them within these six months. The tottering chimney tops are standing, the glass unbroken in the windows, the roads and paths all winding as before, the grass as green, and the trees as fresh, as if this fiery deluge of war had not rolled over the spot on which they are standing. I picked up a bit of cloth and a piece of a bridle." He had got excellent introductions from Lord Holland and Sir James Mackintosh for Paris ; where he accordingly saw a number of important people, and a good deal of Parisian society. But he records little memorable even for that day, and nothing that it would be worth while to repeat now. All the political feeling seems to have been concentrated into hatred of the Bourbons and the English, and utter uncertainty as to what would be the next act of France's protracted tragedy. In the long voyage from Boulogne to Dover, "The sea and the wind became both very high, particularly the former ; a worse and more dangerous sea than is often seen in the open ocean, from the shortness and irregularity of the swell." He finishes by saying that he had examined all the wonders of Dover, and "I have admired the modest and domestic look of the women—eaten roast beef, apple

pie, and mutton chops—drank beer and port wine—and felt myself taking very kindly to all my old British habits and prejudices. The best use of going abroad, I take it, is to make one fond of home; a fondness on which virtue and happiness are both most securely built; and which one who does not leave home too early, can scarcely fail to increase by such an experiment. Something is learnt too, I suppose, though probably of no great value. And things are pleasant to recollect, and to talk of at a distance, which were wearisome enough when they occurred. It was solely to enable me to recollect them, that I have put down this indistinct notice of them all."

A change took place in the beginning of next year, in the administration of justice in Scotland, which it was foreseen would be of importance to Jeffrey. It consisted of the introduction of juries for the trial of facts in civil causes, which was first practised on the 22d of January, 1816. There were no juries here before this except in Exchequer, and in criminal prosecutions. The practice in these courts was not extensive; but such as it was, he had had the best of it, at least before the criminal tribunal, for several years; and his success there suggested him as the counsel likely to be the most successful gleaner in the new field. This expectation was not disappointed. He instantly took up one side of almost every trial in what was then called the Jury Court, as if it had been a sort of right, and held this position as long as he was at the bar. "Tell me (says Horner, 2d June, 1815) what is doing, or meant to be done, about your Jury Court. That will be a great field for you. The success of the new institution must, in a very great measure, depend on the exertions made by the bar." "And with so much of genius and philosophy as adorn the Parliament House at present, it will be imputable to your indolence only if you do not give the thing a right impulse at first," &c.

Jeffrey was well fitted for the new sphere in every re-

spect, though not perhaps without some deductions. His law, which was now recognised as sufficient for the deepest discussions before the judges, was far more than sufficient for any emergency likely to occur in a court, which, instead of getting whole causes to dispose of, had only to investigate certain detached matters of fact specified in previously adjusted issues. He had as great a familiarity with the rules and the philosophy of evidence as any one either at the bar or on the bench. Caution and distrust made him a safe adviser of his client; while no flaw in the case or in the reasoning of his adversary could escape his acuteness. Though superior to the ludicrous and miserable weakness, proceeding generally from professional selfishness, which drives some counsel to identify themselves with every client who employs them, and to fancy that truth and justice are always on their side, a sense of duty, and a natural energy of temperament, excited him to as much zeal as an honourable advocate ought to feel or to profess. Rarely misled by the temptation of a merely temporary triumph, his general management was judicious and prospective. In sagacity he had no superior. It was his peculiar quality. Through the usual dishonesty, misinformation, and prejudices, by which every advocate is liable to be misled, he felt, and could predict, what, either of principle or of assertion, would ultimately stand or would ultimately fail. Thus seeing, from the outset of the voyage, all the rocks and shoals on which the ship was likely to strike, and all the gales that might favour or obstruct it—all the anchors that would hold, and all the harbours of refuge into which it might be run, his steerage was that of a first-rate legal pilot. He scented what would turn out nonsense or falsehood a great way off, and thus was the safest of all general advisers. It was not exactly acuteness or talent; it was a faculty which these qualities often obstruct. Sagacity—or, at least, the sort of sagacity which I mean to describe as belonging to him—consists

principally in the power of taking large and calm surveys, with a view to detect strong or weak points. A person who, knowing him, had never seen him at this work, might have doubted his being effective with juries. He might have feared a manner still somewhat artificial, and a mind addicted to more refined reasoning than plain men might relish. Some of these misgivings would not have been unreasonable. There was, in truth, a want of plainness, directness, and shortness. But it adds greatly to the merit of his success, that he triumphed over even these defects. An invaluable memory for details enabled him to array and to compare any circumstances, however numerous or complicated;* and for whatever difficulty talent was required, he had it in every variety at command. Revelling in the exuberance of his powers, he sometimes put the matter in too many lights; but he never failed to put it in some, or in one, from which no rusticity could escape. The plausibility with which his own sophistry was veiled, was only equalled by the skill with which he exposed that of his opponent. If it was a case where humour was convenient, it gushed readily from a mind habitually practised in ingenious combination of ideas and resemblances, and so brilliant in illustration, that Southey thought this the peculiarity of his intellect. Was a grave or a lofty train of thought or of sentiment proper, who could rise to it more nobly than one who had only to yield to his own natural feelings? But there was another influence around him more honourable than any that mere talent could confer. The people were proud of the Review, of which they were aware that he was the spirit; and they knew that there was no scheme for their elevation which

* He had a fancy, or said that he had it, that though he went to bed with his head stuffed and confused with the names, and dates, and other details of various causes, they were all in order in the morning; which he accounted for by saying, that during sleep "*they all crystallized round their proper centres.*"

did not acknowledge him for its leader, or its most intelligent champion. Then they had always heard of him as amiable and generous; and when they saw him, and he began to do business with them, either gravely or playfully, they were the more disposed to admire the counsel from their personal love of the man.

I wish I could give some examples of his professional style. But it is impossible. Such displays can never be appreciated, or indeed understood, unless where the whole circumstances are fully reported; and even then they are of no value unless they be connected with public events. The life of an advocate is a life spent in the midst of occurrences of the deepest interest to parties; but which, to others, vanishes with the passing hour. There is not a day in which talents are not exhibited in courts of justice equal to the highest that can operate in the most difficult employments in which the human mind can be engaged. The exercise of these talents saves or ruins families. It inflames able men with the fire of professional ambition. It agitates spectators according to various sympathies. If a great public principle or result be involved, such as history must transmit to posterity, what occurs keeps its interest; not as a judicial proceeding, but as a political event. If only private concerns be at issue, the whole affair, though marked by admirable displays of ability, is almost as little cared for after it is over, as the last theatrical exhibition of a great actor. What preserves the forensic glory of Thomas Erskine, except the State trials, which gave subjects of permanent dignity to his genius, and which, thus sustained, his genius made immortal? Few such occasions occur even in England, and far fewer in Scotland;—during Jeffrey's time, indeed, none; and those that possessed some temporary local importance are so imperfectly reported, that the published accounts would rather mislead than assist us in estimating his powers or his style.

The first application of juries to civil justice was in-

trusted to the Right Hon. William Adam, of Blair-Adam, in Kinross-shire, who was put at the head of the new court. This led to an agreeable intercourse between him and Jeffrey. Jeffrey had kept up his Speculative Society friendship with William Adam, the son ; but he now gained the esteem of the whole family ; and speaks, in many of his letters, of his delightful visits to them, in all their branches, both at Blair-Adam and at their villa at Richmond.

In 1816, he wrote the article *Beauty* for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Of all the treatises that have been published on the theory of taste, it is the most complete in its philosophy, and the most delightful in its writing ; and it is as sound as the subject admits of.

After the peace, by delivering the people from foreign alarm, had given them leisure to look into their domestic condition, the various questions of reform that have ever since engrossed their attention began successively to arise. Consistently with the principles and objects it had always adhered to, the *Review* engaged, with its usual animation, in all these discussions. But Jeffrey, though as enthusiastic a reformer as was consistent with prudence, made few personal contributions in this form to the cause. Public affairs, indeed, were generally the smallest of his departments, though in none, when he ventured into it, was his wisdom more conspicuous ; but after this he cultivated the subject even more sparingly than he used to do. Between 1815 and 1820, inclusive, he seems to have only written one article directly on British politics. Nobody who lived in 1819 and 1820 can have forgotten the frightful condition of large portions of the population ; when demagogues aggravated the real miseries of want, by ascribing it to wilful human causes. It was the most horrid period since the days of 1793. Jeffrey's humanity would not allow him to avoid giving a few words of advice on such a crisis ; and in October, 1819, he wrote a short

but excellent article on the state of the nation, (No. 64, art. 2,) containing an exposition to all parties of their errors, their duties, and their danger. His only other articles connected with even general politics were one on De Stael's French Revolution, (September, 1818,) and one (in May, 1820) on the jealousies between America and Britain. This last was a subject to which he was never indifferent. He had constantly endeavoured to remove the irritations which made these two kindred nations think so uncharitably and so absurdly of each other. This article contains an examination of the grounds on which this want of candour is charged by the author of the book he is criticising as solely on the side of the British, and an earnest appeal to the good sense of both communities. He has reprinted this admirable paper in his Selected Contributions, with this note, (v. 4, p. 167:) "There is no one feeling—having public concerns for its object—with which I have been so long and so deeply impressed, as that of the vast importance of our maintaining friendly, and even cordial relations, with the free, powerful, moral, and industrious States of America—a condition upon which I cannot help thinking that not only our own freedom and prosperity, but that of the better part of the world, will ultimately be found to be more and more dependent. I give the first place, therefore, in this concluding division of the work, to an earnest and somewhat importunate exhortation to this effect, which, I believe, produced some impression at the time, and I trust may still help forward the good end to which it was directed."

With these exceptions, his whole contributions during these six years were of a literary character. And it is impossible to read their mere titles without being struck with the view which they exhibit of mental richness and activity. He was in the full career of a professional practice that occupied the greatest portion of his whole time, and during about eight months, yearly, could not be got

through without the exclusive use of ten or even twelve hours a day; besides which, those who only saw him in society, and knew not how the fragments of a diligent man's time may be gathered up, might suppose that he had nothing to do but to dine and to talk. Nevertheless, besides the three articles just mentioned, he wrote, during this period, about thirty-six more, chiefly on literature, biography, and general history.

It is unnecessary to enter into any explanation of the nature of the constitutional and economical reforms which the Whig party in Scotland had been long recommending; and which, now that the people had awakened, and the war could no longer be made the apology for adhering to every abuse, they pressed with greater confidence than ever. It is sufficient to state the facts, that the great majority of the nation deemed these reforms indispensable; and that they have since been all sanctioned by Parliament. The best leaders of the Scotch Whig party were still members of the Faculty of Advocates; who, contrary to their interests, had adhered to their principles with a constancy most honourable to themselves, and, I fear, with too few examples at other bars. It was to the Parliament House that the country looked for guidance; and to no individual so much as to Jeffrey. He justified their confidence by his zeal, intelligence, and caution. Seeing the course that the current was taking, and the certainty of its being at last irresistible, he thought the slowness of its motion, which gave more time for knowledge, no misfortune; and therefore seldom originated active proceedings. But, so as his uniform recommendation of uniting reasonableness of object with temperance of means, was acceded to, he never shrank from coming forward when required; and, consequently, was always in the van. The battles he had to fight, like most of the common battles of party after they are over, may seem insignificant now. But they were of very serious importance at the time, insomuch that there

are many who will consider a failure to explain them as depriving Jeffrey of much of his public merit. But I cannot think that any exposition of their detail is necessary, or that reasonable curiosity may not be satisfied by a general reference to transactions which, even at the distance of thirty years, there is some pain in remembering. I shall therefore only state, that as it was clear that the battle of internal reform had begun, there was no place where this truth was perceived with greater horror than at Edinburgh. The reason of this was that Edinburgh was the great seat of the influence of government in Scotland. The most numerous, and the highest class of political competitors was there, and there was more patronage to fight for. Complaint had been so habitually crushed, that the defenders of the old system considered every effort towards independence as rebellion; while those who made these efforts treated opposition to them as tyranny. Neither of these feelings was at all unnatural, in the position of the parties. But the conflict was carried on with very different arms; which I shall not describe or contrast. The Whigs made no secret that their object was to emancipate Scotland. They were opposed with great bitterness, and with unhandsome weapons. These local animosities lasted some years, and brought Jeffrey and his associates into constant collision with their opponents. During those protracted and irritating proceedings, his judgment and his eloquence were often required, and nearly as often exerted; to the effect of greatly animating the spirits and advancing the cause of his party all over the country. I will not gain him praise by any more particular disclosure of scenes which I wish I could forget, and which I am persuaded that others regret. But I could convey no idea of his exertions in what he thought the right public cause without mentioning generally some of his appearances as they arose.

It is impossible to do so, or indeed to explain almost any

of the local proceedings of his public life, without mentioning Sir James Craig, who was active in them all. He died at his seat of Riccarton, on the 6th March, 1850, in his eighty-fifth year. Prompt, able, and vigorous ; with a decisive and resolute manner ; his whole life was spent in fearless usefulness. He was so prominent in our worst times, that it is difficult to understand how Thomas Muir could be transported, and James Gibson (his original name) not be even tried. Boldness, talent, and devotion to the apparently desperate cause of Scottish freedom, and even his personal strength and stateliness, made him the terror and hatred of some ; while the same qualities, exercised without the relaxation of almost a single day, and given without regard to trouble, risk, or expense, to every object connected with our liberation, made him the idol of others. No private individual, out of Parliament, never publishing, and rarely speaking, and largely occupied with private business, did so much, throughout all its progress, to uphold the popular cause. There could be no ebb or flow of Whiggism in Scotland, but this active and ardent spirit was sure to be in the midst of it. When public discussion was necessary, good sense generally withdrew him from the conspicuous positions ; but those who occupied them could best tell what they owed to his previous management. Being the general patron of all the needy patriots in Scotland, to whom he had long been predicting brighter days, he sought for places for them far oftener than he liked ; but for himself he was spotless. He refused every thing, both when the Whigs were in office in 1805, and in 1830 ; and, except his baronetcy in 1832, I am not aware that any benefits depending on politics ever accrued, through him, either to himself or to any member of his family. Besides being relied upon by political allies, he had the personal confidence and esteem of many to whom his politics were odious. He owed this to his general ability in business, and to the warmth of his heart. For, with all his party

zeal, he was a milky-blooded man. No one could doubt this who was ever with him in his family. Seeing Sir James Craig in his fields, or among his villagers, or by his fireside, was one of the sights that show how, in right natures, the kind affections can survive public contention. Craig's very name suggested the idea of Ephesus and conflict; yet no contented man, wearing his days away in the tranquillity of rural life, could be more amiable. This was one of the cases which makes the simple comprehend how the fierce opposition of some public men can subsist with perfect candour and good-will before each attack begins, and the instant after it ends; so that while the world sees nothing but the foaming of the cataract, and imagines that these men are all rapids, the truth is, that their private lives flow away sweetly and silently. Craig had almost a veneration for Jeffrey, and Jeffrey had a high esteem of him. Not that he could always sympathize with Sir James's zeal; or that he did not sometimes fret under his activity; or, especially when Lord Advocate, that he had not occasionally to check his interference. But these exceptions left their general relation unimpaired, and whenever Jeffrey appeared publicly in any Scotch movement, it might be deemed nearly certain that he and Craig were in concert.

On the 24th of February, 1816, a public meeting was held in Edinburgh, in favour of the abolition of the income-tax. Though not a party meeting, the bad example of any political meeting whatever excited considerable alarm. Jeffrey made the principal speech, and moved certain resolutions, which James Moncrieff seconded, and they were carried.

On the 5th of March, 1817, in the paltry case of McLaren and Baird, (State Trials, vol. xxxiii.,) who were that day convicted of sedition, he made the best speech that has ever yet been made in a Scotch court in defence of a prisoner accused of that crime.

The “*Biographical Sketches of my Literary Life and Opinions*,” by Mr. Coleridge, published that year, contained a very unhandsome personal attack on him, founded upon most inaccurate statements of what had passed at a visit paid by him to Mr. Southey, in 1810, at which Mr. Coleridge was present. Jeffrey wrote a review of this work, (No. 56, article 10, August, 1817,) to which he added a long note, giving his version of this affair, and defending his general literary treatment of the Lake school. This defence was quite proper at the time; but the personal matter has now become insignificant. The parties are all dead; and if any living man can believe that Jeffrey was capable of behaving with meanness and cruelty, that person may read this note, and then adhere to his belief if he can.

It was about this time that he first became acquainted with the Rev. Dr. Chalmers, who began to contribute excellent articles to the Review. There was a strong mutual affection and admiration, each appreciating the virtues and understanding the genius of the other. There were few, unconnected with him in religious objects, whom Chalmers loved more; and Jeffrey always thought him a great moral philosopher, an enthusiastic philanthropist, and the noblest orator of the age.

In February, 1818, he did what he never did before or since. He stuck a speech. John Kemble had taken his leave of our stage, and before quitting Edinburgh, about sixty or seventy of his admirers gave him a dinner and a snuff-box. Jeffrey was put into the chair, and had to make the address previous to the presentation. He began very promisingly, but got confused, and amazed both himself and everybody else, by actually sitting down, and leaving the speech unfinished; and, until reminded of that part of his duty, not even thrusting the box into the hand of the intended receiver. He afterward told me the reason of this. He had not premeditated the scene, and thought he had nothing to do except in the name of the company to

give the box. But as soon as he rose to do this, Kemble, who was beside him, rose also, and with most formidable dignity. This forced Jeffrey to look up to his man ; when he found himself annihilated by the tall tragic god ; who sank him to the earth at every compliment, by obeisances of overwhelming grace and stateliness. If the chairman had anticipated his position, or recovered from his first confusion, his mind and words could easily have subdued even Kemble.

About this period Edinburgh was clouded by several sad deaths.

Horner died on the 17th of April, 1817. His memoirs have since been published by his brother Leonard, to whom, both on his own account and because it tended to recall the deceased, Jeffrey transferred great affection. Mr. Leonard Horner mentions in his preface, that, instead of making out this interesting life himself, he had put the papers into the hands of an “eminent person, who, by his early and uninterrupted intimacy with my brother, his varied accomplishments, and his known powers as a writer, was peculiarly fitted to be my brother’s biographer.” This person was Jeffrey, who delayed the task so long that he was obliged at last to give it up.

Henry Erskine died on the 8th of October of that year. Jeffrey thought so highly of him, that he wrote an account of him, which he sent, as he once or twice did other slight articles, to the Scots Magazine, then conducted by his friend Morchead, and afterward gave it a place in the last volume of his Selected Contributions. It is short, but affectionate and just.

Erskine disappeared in old age. But Dr. John Gordon, physician, who died in June, 1818, was taken from us in the very flower of his manhood. He was one of the many young men whose talents the late Dr. John Thomson had the merit of discovering and encouraging. A taste for science was combined in him with well-directed industry,

and with a look and manner inexpressibly pleasing. He was rising rapidly to the best medical practice, and the success of his private lectures on physiology justified our proudest hopes for the University. His unexpected loss made a momentary pause in our sorrow for Horner. Jeffrey had a genuine affection for him; a feeling, however, in which the whole community shared. He was ill only a few days; and on the last day he was ever out, he sat in an arbour in the garden of Craigmoray. His friend, Dr. Daniel Ellis, the author of several valuable works on vegetable physiology, published a memoir of him. The beautiful account of his personal character and demeanour was supplied by Jeffrey. The "*graceful frankness, and gay sincerity,*" are very descriptive of the manner.

Lord Webb Seymour, after a long course of feeble health, passed away on the 19th of April, 1819.

His great friend John Playfair, for whom indeed principally he had fixed himself in Edinburgh, followed him in three months. His death was on the 19th of July, 1819. Jeffrey has left a description of this delightful philosopher also; so true and so discriminating, that it would be presumptuous in any one else to touch the portrait. That part of the funeral which takes place within the house was a spectacle never to be forgotten; attended as it was by the most eminent men in this place, among whom were Dugald Stewart, Dr. James Gregory, Mr. Henry Mackenzie, the Rev. Archibald Alison, Dr. Thomas Brown, Mr. Thomas Thomson, Mr. Jeffrey, and others of that order, the friends and old associates of the deceased, and elevated by the noblest of prayers by Sir Harry.

To those who knew Edinburgh, I need not say what it suffered by the loss of these five men. They were the delight and the pride of the place.

Jeffrey felt equally honoured by the friendship of another eminent person, whose regard for him was the chief inducement to his occasionally visiting this place,—James Watt,

the improver of the steam engine. He died on the 25th of August, 1819. And, on the 4th of September, there appeared in the *Scotsman* newspaper, that striking delineation of the man, and what he had done, by Jeffrey, which he has since published at the end of his Contributions.

It was reported about this time that Mr. Thomas Moore had fallen under some severe pecuniary misfortune, on which Jeffrey wrote as follows to Mr. Rogers :—

“ Edinburgh, 30th July, 1819 :—My dear Sir, I have been very much shocked and distressed by observing in the newspapers the great pecuniary calamity which has fallen on our excellent friend Moore ; and not being able to get any distinct information, either as to its extent, or its probable consequences, from anybody here, I have thought it best to relieve my anxiety by applying to you, whose kind concern in him must have made you acquainted with all the particulars, and willing, I hope, to satisfy the inquiries of one who sincerely shows interest in his concerns. I do not know, however, that I should have troubled you merely to answer any useless inquiry. But in wishing to know whether any steps have been taken to mitigate this disaster, I am desirous of knowing, also, whether I can be of any use on the occasion. I have, unfortunately, not a great deal of money to spare. But if it should be found practicable to relieve him from this unmerited distress by any contribution, I beg leave to say I should think it an honour to be allowed to take a share in it to the extent of £300, or £500, and that I could advance more than double that sum over and above, upon any reasonable security of ultimate repayment, however long postponed. I am quite aware of the difficulty of carrying through any such arrangement with a man of Moore’s high feeling and character, and had he been unmarried, or without children, he might have been less reluctantly left to the guidance and support of that character. But as it

is, I think his friends are bound to make an effort to prevent such lasting and extended misery, as, from all I have heard, seems now to be impending. And in hands at once so kind and so delicate as yours, I flatter myself that this may be found practicable. I need not add, I am sure, that I am most anxious that, whether ultimately acted upon or not, this communication should never be mentioned to Moore himself. If you please, you may tell him that I have been deeply distressed by his misfortunes, and should be most happy to do him any service. But as I have no right to speak to him of money, I do not think he should know that I have spoken of it to you. If my offer is accepted, I shall consider you and not him as the acceptor. And he ought not to be burdened with the knowledge of any other benefactor.

“ Is there no chance of seeing you in Scotland again ? We have had a sad loss in Playfair, and which is quite irreparable to the society here. It is a comfort to think we cannot possibly have such another. We had a great fright about Scott, but fortunately he is quite recovered. I have a sort of project of running over to Paris again this autumn. If I had a chance of finding you in the Rue de Rivoli, I should not hesitate a moment. I am not quite so insensible to the advantages of this encounter as I appeared to be. And I have a thousand times since reproached myself for having made so little use of them.”

A commission was issued in summer, 1820, for the trial of certain persons in Scotland who were charged with high-treason. Jeffrey, (as I understand,) from that professional charity which is so common and so honourable at the Scotch bar, where no prisoner has ever been tried without counsel, went to Stirling and took charge of some of the defences. He tells Mrs. Morehead, (July, 1820,) “ I have made two long speeches, and have not spared or disgraced myself; though success was scarcely possible.” The thing that distinguished the proceedings in so far as he personally

was concerned, was, that for the only occasion in his whole practice, he got into bad terms with a professional brother. This brother was a serjeant, who had been sent from England to keep us all right in the mysteries of English treason law. I believe he was a very good man, and his being charged with such a duty seems to show that he was a respectable counsel. But some of those who were present report that he was plainly prepossessed with very contemptuous ideas of every thing Scotch, but especially of the lawyers. He had no notion what Jeffrey was, and had probably never heard either of him or of the Edinburgh Review. His disdain was returned without ceremony. It is likely that there were faults on both sides. But the fact is, that they got on very ill, and were on the very edge of personal quarrel.

It was in 1820 that he had the comfort of finding Miss Joanna Baillie reconciled to him. His criticisms of her plays, though able, and even complimentary, but not without discrimination, gave not unnatural offence when they first appeared, (1803,) from something of apparent flippancy, or at least of what a lady might suppose to be so, in their style, and she long declined being introduced to him. They met, however, in Edinburgh this autumn, with the almost invariable result on those who had a prejudice against him, of permanent respect and esteem. He, ever after making her acquaintance, continued her steady friend, and seldom was in London without going to Hampstead to see her. “We went out to Joanna Baillie yesterday, and found her delightfully cheerful, kind, and simple, without the least trait of the tragic muse about her.”—(To me, 1st April, 1838.) “I forgot to tell you that I have been twice out to Hampstead to hunt out Joanna Baillie, and found her the other day, as fresh, natural, and amiable as ever, and as little like a tragic muse. Since Mrs. Brougham’s death, I do not know so nice an old woman.”—(To Miss Brown, 28th April, 1840.) “We went out to

Hampstead, and paid a very pleasant visit to Joanna Baillie, who is marvellous in health and spirits, and youthful freshness and simplicity of feeling, and not a bit blind, deaf, or torpid."—(To Miss Brown, January, 1842.) "I had a very kind visit from Joanna Baillie to-day; looking beautiful, and without a touch of blindness, deafness, or languor, and now in her eightieth year."—(To me, 22d February, 1842.) "That nice Joanna Baillie has also been in my neighbourhood for several days, and is the prettiest, best dressed, kindest, happiest, and most entire beauty of fourscore that has been seen since the flood."—(February, 1842.)

Toward the close of this year a public meeting was held in Edinburgh, which, in reference to the state of Scotland at that time, was very important, and is not yet forgotten. It is known as "*The Pantheon Meeting*," from the building within which it was held. It was called in order to petition the crown for the dismissal of the ministry; and was thus not merely political, but directly hostile to existing power; being the first open and respectable assemblage that had been convened in this place, for such a purpose, for about twenty-five years. It was meant, and was received, as a criterion of the strength of the two parties of those friendly, and those opposed, to reform; and there could be no better evidence of its importance, than the fury with which all connected with it were assailed. All that I have to do with it is in reference to Jeffrey. It was a large and respectable assemblage, held on the 19th of December, 1820. Moncrieff presided. The excitement, the inexperience in the art of managing such convocations, and the danger of language as violent as that which had for several days been directed against it, made it at first a very hazardous experiment. But Jeffrey rose, and all fears vanished. He made the first, and a very moderate speech; well calculated for popular effect certainly, but which would have done most men honour in a fastidious parliament. It soon

made the meeting take the proper tone, and feel that its strength lay in avoiding the extravagance of which it had been predicted that it would be guilty. Accordingly, after carrying strong resolutions, with only two dissentient voices, the proceedings and the day closed in peace.*

The first official honour that he ever received was now conferred upon him by the students of the College of Glasgow. They elected him their Lord Rector. This officer is the second person in the establishment in rank, being inferior to the chancellor alone. It is too often considered as a merely honorary situation ; but it has important duties, and ought as rarely as possible to be made so. In academical jurisdiction, the rector is superior even to the chancellor. He is elected annually in November by the professors and the matriculated students. For many years the custom had been for the students not seriously to interfere ; and, judging from the list of the elected, the professors seem to have been on wonderfully good terms with the country gentlemen in their neighbourhood. Adam Smith, who was chosen in 1787, was the last person who could have been chosen on account of his literary or philosophical reputation. Jeffrey, who was the next, would never have been chosen in 1820 by the professors. But things had begun to change ; of which there could not possibly be more striking signs than the two facts, that these young men took the election into their own hands, where they have kept it ever since, and that their first choice fell upon him. His having been at that college himself, and having frequently attended their annual distribution of prizes on the 1st of May, perhaps inclined them a little toward him ; but these accidents alone would never have produced the result. He was elected as a homage to his personal literature, and to the great work with which his name was associated,

* The petition was signed by about 17,000 persons ; the opposite by fewer than 2000.

and to his public principles and conduct. When he told us of this perfectly unanticipated event, it sounded like the intimation of a miracle. He went to Glasgow, and was installed on the 28th of December, 1820, ten days after the Pantheon meeting. The novelty of the occasion created great excitement.

He made a beautiful speech; beautifully delivered.* It delighted him to do justice to the eminent men he remembered there,—Reid, Millar, and Jardine, the last of whom had the gratification of hearing his old pupil's address. Of himself he says, “It was here that, now more than thirty years ago, I received the earliest, and by far the most valuable part of my academical education; and first imbibed that relish and veneration for letters, which has cheered and directed the whole course of my after life; and to which, amidst all the distractions of rather too busy an existence, I have never failed to return with fresh and unabated enjoyment. Nor is it merely by those distant and pleasing recollections—by the touching retrospect of those scenes of guiltless ambition and youthful delight, when every thing around and before me was bright with novelty and hope, that this place, and all the images it recalls, are at this moment endeared to my heart. Though I have been able, I fear, to do but little to honour this early nurse of my studies, since I was first separated from her bosom, I will yet presume to say, that I have been, during all that interval, an affectionate and not an inattentive son. For the whole of that period I have watched over her progress, and gloried in her fame. And at your literary olympics, where your prizes are distributed, and the mature swarm annually cast off to ply its busy task in the wider circuit of the world, I have generally been found a fond and eager spectator of that youthful prowess in which I had ceased

* It is the first in a handsome volume of “Inaugural Discourses by Lords Rectors of the University of Glasgow,” by John Barras Hay, published in 1839.

to be a sharer, and a delighted chronicler of that excellence which never ceased to be supplied."

He closes by this admonition—"I have but a word more to say, and that is addressed, perhaps needlessly, to the younger part of my hearers. It would be absurd to suppose that they had not heard often enough of the dignity of the studies in which they are engaged, and of the infinite importance of improving the time that is now allotted for their cultivation. Such remarks, however, I think I can recollect, are sometimes received with distrust, when they come from those anxious teachers whose authority they may seem intended to increase; and, therefore, I venture to think, that it may not be altogether useless for me to add my unsuspected testimony in behalf of those great truths; and, while I remind the careless youth around me, that the successful pursuit of their present studies is indispensable to the attainment of fame or fortune in after life, also to assure them, from my own experience, that they have a value far beyond their subserviency to worldly prosperity; and will supply, in every situation, the purest and most permanent enjoyment, at once adorning and relieving the toils and vexations of a busy life, and refining and exalting the enjoyments of a social one. It is impossible, however, that those studies can be pursued to advantage in so great an establishment as this, without the most dutiful observance of that discipline and subordination, without which so numerous a society must unavoidably fall into the most miserable disorder, and the whole benefits of its arrangements be lost. As one of the guardians of this discipline, I cannot bid you farewell, therefore, without most earnestly entreating you to submit cheerfully, habitually, and gracefully, to all that the parental authority of your instructors may find it necessary to enjoin; being fully persuaded, that such a free and becoming submission is not only the best proof of the value you put on their instructions, but, in so far as I have

ever observed, the most unequivocal test of a truly generous and independent character."

Death has been busy since ; but of about a dozen friends who accompanied him, six or seven survive, and remember the joyous nocturnal banquet by which the formal and academical festival of this installation was followed.

He was elected again, according to the usual practice, next year, (November, 1821;) and in November, 1822, had a very painful duty to discharge. The electors are divided into four nations, and it is a vote by a majority of the nations that decides each election ; and as a small nation counts the same with a large one, there may be a great majority of individual votes, while the nations stand two to two. In 1822, the persons set up were Sir Walter Scott and Sir James Mackintosh. The nations were equally divided, but the majority of individual votes was in favour of Sir James. In this situation it devolved on the preceding rector to decide. Both of the two chosen were eminent, both Scotchmen, both his personal friends. His feeling was to do all honour to the illustrious Sir Walter. But his reason compelled him to give his decision in favour of Mackintosh. His grounds were, that though nothing could exceed the glory of Scott, Mackintosh was unquestionably the more academical ; and that his supporters were the most numerous. This last consideration has generally been deemed conclusive in such an emergency. On retiring he founded a prize.

Soon after his installation, he took an active part in a series of political meetings ; of all of which, though they went on annually for five years after this, (1821 to 1826 inclusive,) it may be as well to dispose at once. When I mention that they were all public dinners, it may seem that, after such an interval, they might have been allowed to be forgotten. But, in point of fact, they are not forgotten yet, and were by far the most effective of all the public movements in Scotland on the popular side, at that

time. Amidst the numerous similar meetings that were then held all over the empire, they were prominent from the numbers, the respectability, and the talent, that distinguished them. They were organized chiefly by the method and activity of Mr. Leonard Horner, the founder of our School of Arts, and, indirectly, of all these institutions; one of the most useful citizens that Edinburgh ever possessed. They gathered together the aristocracy, in station and in character, of the Scotch Whig party; but derived still greater weight from the open accession of citizens, who for many years had been taught to shrink from political interference on this side, as hurtful to their business. The meetings were always held, as nearly as could be, on the anniversary of the birth-day of Charles Fox. To some of the elder, these free and open meetings were a gratifying contrast to the days in which this festival was very privately held; yet rarely without there being officers and spies set to watch the door, and to take down the names of those who entered—a hint which only a few bolder spirits had nerve to disregard.

These were not scenes in which it was beneath any man to act. Jeffrey entered into their spirit and their business cordially; and spoke at every one of them; and never did he speak anywhere with more forethought. Nothing but a sense of duty could have compelled him to adhere so steadily to exhibitions, for which, in themselves, he had a strong distaste. He never stooped to any topic so low as that it bordered on the common vulgarities of party; but inspired his audiences by appeals to general principles. These addresses were sufficient of themselves to impress a character of purity and dignity on each assemblage. He elevated them toward the highest objects; which he gave them a desire to reach only by the most liberal ways. He presided on the 24th of January, 1825; when he perhaps displayed as much intellect and power in that sort of speaking as ever sustained any one in that peculiar and

hazardous position. At the meeting on the 26th of January, 1826, he was thought to have surpassed himself in a speech recommending candour and respect toward America. On the 18th of November, 1825, he spoke twice at another dinner given to Mr. Joseph Hume—that is, to the cause of economy, which that gentleman was supposed to represent. One of these addresses was on behalf of the Spaniards and Italians who had sought refuge in Britain. The other was on the combination laws; and was chiefly valuable on account of his clear and eloquent explanation of the dangers and follies of unions and strikes by workmen. This speech was published as a pamphlet, and in two or three days above 8000 copies were sold.

Throughout all these movements the case of Scotland was powerfully upheld by two friends of his,—the Hon. James Abercrombie, afterward speaker, and now Lord Dunfermline, and Mr. Kennedy of Dunure, M. P.; to both of whom, amid higher calls to this duty, the fact of Jeffrey's opinions and co-operation was a powerful additional inducement to engage in the course where their services were so conspicuous and valuable.

I do not know the particulars of the scheme, but there was a scheme toward the close of the year 1821 to bring Jeffrey into Parliament; which he defeated by positively declining. The proposal was made in confidence, and therefore he never spoke of it. But on the 27th of January, 1822, he wrote to Mr. Wilkes, “I have had two overtures to take a seat in Parliament; but have given a peremptory refusal—from taste as well as from prudence. I am not in the least ambitious, and feel no desire to enter upon public life at such a moment as the present.”

He was an idolater of Loch Lomond, and used often to withdraw there and refresh himself by its beauties. After resorting for several years to inns, he made the acquaintance of a gentleman, (Mr. McMurick,) who, observing the stranger's attachment to the loch, and having more room

in his house than he required, invited him, with Mrs. Jeffrey and their child, to take up their quarters, but leaving them to follow their own times and ways, at his delightful little residence on the lake, as often and as long as they chose. This kind and considerate proposal being acceded to, they went to Stuckgown in the autumn of 1822. These sojourns generally lasted two or three weeks, and were renewed, though not exactly every year, till his daughter's marriage in 1838, when they ceased. Dearly did he enjoy these retirements. He pretended to like even the boating, and delighted in mountains, for which one of his habits—an indifference about rain—was very convenient.

His first retreat to Stuckgown is thus mentioned in a letter to his father-in-law, Mr. Wilkes: “22d September, 1822, Edinburgh—My dear friend, Here we are, enjoying our autumn leisure as idly as if it were never to end, and as much like what we were last year and the year before, and so on, as if we had neither grown older, or intended ever to begin. The only thing that changes visibly is the little one, who does grow bigger and dearer from year to year, and makes us start to think that she was a nonentity when we parted. Well, but is not this a very good account of us, and almost all that need be said? This royal visit* kept us in a fever for a month of sweet weather, and then we posted away to Loch Lomond, where we stayed ten days among our dear cataracts and cliffs, and have only returned about a week to our own quiet home. It rained almost every day while we were in the Highlands, and most commonly all day; but the weather never confined either Charlotte or me for an hour, and I do not think at all interfered with our enjoyment. It was soft, and calm, and balmy, and we walked, and rowed, and climbed, and scrambled, without minding the rain any more than the ravens. We were out eight or nine hours every day, thoroughly wet most of the

* Of George the Fourth to Edinburgh.

time, and never experienced the least inconvenience or discomfort; but came home more plump and rosy than we had been since last year. The roaring of the mountain torrents in a calm morning after a rainy night has something quite delicious to my ears, and actually makes a kind of music, of which you dwellers in the plains can have no conception. From the platform before our door we had twenty at least in sight, and more than a hundred within hearing; and the sort of thrilling they made in the air, with the mingling of the different waters on the last swelling of the breeze, had an effect quite overpowering and sublime. We had a few delicious days on our return, which was by Hamilton and the Falls of Clyde; and now we have bright crisp autumn weather, deeply tinted foliage and great clusters of hollyhocks, China roses, stocks, and mignonette. The child was with us of course all the time, bathed every day in the loch, and went with me on the barouche seat of the carriage, chattering the whole way, and taking her first lessons in picturesque beauty. Both she and her mother, I think, have come home fatter than I remember to have seen them."

Early in 1823 Mr. Wilkes came from New York with his two daughters, Mrs. Colden and Miss Wilkes, and Mr. Colden, on a visit to Jeffrey, and to his brother-in-law Mons. Simond at Geneva. It was a grateful visit to the family at Craigerook, and to its Edinburgh friends; who, though they have never seen Mrs. Jeffrey's sisters since, have the greatest pleasure in their recollection. Mr. Wilkes, who died in 1833, gained every heart. There never was a more lovable man.

As the American party meant to go to the Continent, this tempted Jeffrey to engraft an expedition of his own on theirs; and Mr. Richardson and I agreed to join him. Venice was our main object; seeing as much else as we could in the short time we had. We accordingly set off in July; saw Belgium and Holland, went up the Rhine,

into Switzerland, crossed by St. Gothard down upon the north of Italy, and so to Venice ; where we remained some days ; then homeward by Milan, the Simplon, Geneva, and Paris. Jeffrey's journal is full of dates, places, and striking observations and descriptions, but contains nothing worth making public. It was a delightful journey. Its only defect arose from his inveterate abhorrence of early rising ; which compelled us to travel during the hottest part of the day. This aversion to the dawn, unless when seen before going to bed, lasted his whole life. He very seldom went to sleep so soon as two in the morning, and distrusted all accounts of the early rising virtues. He tells Lord Murray, in a letter in 1829, that he had been much pleased with a family he had been visiting near Bath, "especially with the patriarch, a marvellous brisk young gentleman of eighty-two, who gallops up and down the country in all weathers, reads without spectacles, and is neither deaf, dull, nor testy. I find, to my great delight, that he never rose early in his life ; though I am concerned to add that he has for some years been a water drinker ; a vice, however, which he talks of reforming."

He was in London again in 1824, upon Scotch appeals ; with which, indeed, his visits there were very often connected. This, however, was work which, notwithstanding his experience in it, he seems to have liked as little as any counsel can ever like to argue their own law before judges who do not understand it. His practice there had hitherto been almost exclusively before Lord Eldon ; who, by patience, dignity, learning, and respect for the law he had to dispense, and for the courts he had to direct, left that house a model of the judicial qualifications by which alone its high appellate character can be maintained. Yet, even the presidency of this judge, however it might mitigate, could not entirely remove the disagreeableness of addressing a court considerably ignorant of the law it had to declare. The mere necessity of translating terms, and of

explaining rudiments, is teasing ; and there is a far more serious distress in the tendency of every foreign court to respect, or to despise, whatever it may hear of the law of another country, solely according to its agreement with the law of their own. Before a cautious and liberal judge, a comparison of systems may benefit both. But with a rash or a commonplace judge, it is apt to be very hurtful. It leads him to condemn and to ridicule whatever is strange to his narrow vision ; and covers presumption or indifference under the shelter of the law within which he may be respectable. Such a person, instead of being awed by conscious ignorance into modesty, naturally falls into the style of showing his superiority by openly contemning, because it is foreign, the law, which it is his duty to understand, or not to administer.*

* It would be a valuable law book which, omitting cases of fact, as useless, should examine the past course of the appellate judgments, with the view of weighing its effects, for good or for evil, on the law and the practice of Scotland on points of permanent importance.

The disposal of individual causes, however, is not the sole use of a court of appeal. Its indirect influence in controlling inferior tribunals is very material ; and throughout the first hundred years after the Union, there were circumstances in the condition of Scotland which made this control indispensable. But an appeal now to a court not at home in the law on which the appeal depends, and unaided by any Scotch lawyers, except those who may happen to be at the bar, and are consequently interested, does certainly seem strange ; especially as the law of England appears to tolerate no rival, and its practice to be ill calculated for opening the mind to the comprehension of general principles, or of any foreign system. Our English friends would perhaps understand the matter better, if it were proposed to make appeals competent from their courts to ours, of which the principles are so much more extensively founded on what seems, not merely to ourselves, but to enlightened strangers, to be reason. The great problem is, to get the law of Scotland deferred to in the Court of Appeal ; which in this matter is in theory, and ought to be in practice, a Scotch court.

We sometimes hear English counsel blamed for their open derision of the law of Scotland at the bar of the House of Lords, which it is said that they occasionally profess to feel as an abomination, and purify themselves

It added to his discomfort that the dignity of that high tribunal, though the judicial uniform may be dispensed with, cannot be maintained without the full bar attire. He bewails, in a letter written after a day's attendance there, on this occasion, the severity of being obliged to "sit six hours silent, *in a wig.*"

In 1825 he got what he calls "*a glimpse of Ireland,*" being his only one. His friend the late Mr. Mungo Brown, a person of piety and of singular purity of character, was going to the assizes at Carrickfergus, to give evidence of the Scotch marriage law, and this seems to have been Jeffrey's temptation to go and take a look at the country. They left Greenock on the 25th of July, and were home again on the 1st of August; so that it was truly but a glimpse. Yet they were very active, and his journal is rather amusing. "One sees the Irish character at once, even in this new and half Scottish colony—(Belfast.) The loquacity—the flattery—the gayety—the prompt, unhesitating engagement for all things—the reckless boasting—the shameless failure—the audacious falsehood—the entire good-nature, kindness, and sociality of disposition—are all apparent at the very first, and do not soon cease to strike." He saw a good deal of O'Connell, who is described as "large and muscular; with an air and an eye in which a half natural and half assumed, indolent good-nature and simplicity are curiously blended with a kind of cunning and consciousness of superiority. He spoke with a great deal of brogue, and very fearlessly and readily, on all subjects,—Catholic

(after taking fees in it) by protesting that they find it difficult to speak seriously about any thing so barbarous. If this charge be true, its only importance is in its application to the court. Counsel seldom say what they believe will offend the judges.

The proper form of obtaining judicial aid from Scotland, *when it is required*, is a matter deserving great consideration; but with the example of England before us, it is not obvious how there should be much difficulty.

and English supremacy, Irish business, law and individuals—without study or apparent attention to words or effect.” The velocity of the criminal proceedings shocked him; but he was pleased with the civil trial for which Brown had gone, though less with the bar than with the bench. “I heard North make a speech of two and a half hours, which I understood was a good specimen of the most ornate style of speaking in Ireland. It was very elegantly and exactly composed, but I thought puerile in its style and ornaments, and singularly injudicious and extravagant in its statement, when compared with the evidence by which it was followed. It was very clear, however, not very verbose, and very pure on the whole in diction. But he talked of the Catholic laws, ‘*turning the torch of Hymen into the black brand of Alecto*;’ and told the jury that if they refused to believe a witness because there might be ‘*inaccuracies and exaggerations in his evidence, they might as well refuse to drink of the pure and wholesome stream because its waters were stained by the earth which composed its banks, or chafed by the rocks or pebbles which broke the smoothness of its course.*’” Jeffrey had the honour of dining with the judges and the leading counsel, but gives rather a bad account of the physical part of the banquet—“no napkins even, or silver forks, bad port and sherry at dinner, and two bottles of bad claret after.”

Political economy is so recent a science that no provision for its being taught could be made by the constitution of old colleges. Accordingly it was never taught in any Scotch college, except by Professor Mylne at Glasgow, and by Dugald Stewart, in his two short and very general courses, at the beginning of this century. Having now become the most important of all the practical moral sciences, an effort was made during this summer (1825) to obtain a Regius Professorship for it in Edinburgh, and to confer the office on Mr. John R. McCulloch, who had already given excellent lectures on this subject, and was

rising into the position he has attained, as the first economist of the age. The scheme was at first warmly patronized by Mr. Wallace, the President of the Board of Trade, by Canning, Huskisson, and Lord Dudley. Mr. Huskisson recommended that a memorial should be got from Edinburgh, respectably, but not numerously, signed, offering to endow the chair, and praying the crown to erect it, which he engaged to lay before government. Jeffrey, who took a deep interest in the affair, both from his conviction of its utility, and from his regard for Mr. McCulloch, and his certainty of his friend's fitness, drew up the memorial;* which was subscribed by thirty or forty excellent names, including those of five judges and twelve professors, who, "or some of them," engaged to secure an adequate endowment. But at this stage an unworthy obstacle was thrown in the way from Edinburgh, and the plan was defeated.

Jeffrey partook in 1826 of the sorrow and consternation of all Scotland, on the disclosure of the pecuniary misfortunes of Sir Walter Scott. Mr. Constable, the publisher of the Review, whose bankruptcy produced the crash, was Jeffrey's debtor to a very considerable amount on account of that work. The claim, after some negotiation, was settled. But even while his recovering any thing seemed extremely doubtful, all feeling for his own loss was forgotten amid his grief for the severer calamity that had fallen on Scott. Indeed, it never disturbed his serenity. Writing to Mr. Richardson, who acted as usual as his professional friend in London, he says, (21st January, 1826,) "It is grievous to annoy you with all this dull stuff, which I am happy to tell you does not make me in the least unhappy. Cockburn has taken advantage of it to indite what he terms a *Constable dinner*; to be held at my house

* It was afterward published in the *Scotsman* newspaper, 27th September, 1826.

next Saturday, and to be continued weekly till I get out of my difficulties."

In the year 1827 he left his house in George Street, and rose to his last domicile in 24 Moray Place.

His practice, which was now in its zenith, lessened his contributions to the Review, and made him feverish about new writers. "Can you not lay your hand on some clever young man who would write for us? The original supporters of the work are getting old, and either too busy, or too stupid, to go on comfortably; and here the young men are mostly Tories."—(To Allen, 3d January, 1825.)

During the first gleam of liberal government, under Mr. Canning in 1827, Jeffrey was advised, by some of his English friends of influence, to try and obtain a seat on the bench, if there should be a vacancy. He had no objections to this "*honesta demissio*," but adds (to me, 20th October, 1827,) "I had a hankering after the '*dignified ease of a Baron of Exchequer*.'" A very natural hankering for one who merely wished for a very well-paid sinecure; but an odd conception for a person of his mental activity. The possibility of some judicial promotion having transpired, the fact of his connection with the Review was whispered as an objection. He asks what the *exact ground* of the objection is, and says, (to me, 1st November, 1827,) "I was always aware that the political character of the work, its *party* principles, and occasional party violence, *might*, when concentrated on the head of the only ostensible party, raise an objection of moment; and for this and its consequences I should not care much. But it has occurred to me, I confess for the first time, that the objection may be rested on the notion that the *Editor of a periodical work*, whatever its political character might be, and even if it were purely literary, and without any politics, had derogated from the personal dignity required in a judge, and ought not to presume so high. From the very first I have been anxious to keep clear of any tradesman-like

concern in the Review, and to confine myself pretty strictly to intercourse with *gentlemen* only, even as contributors. It would vex me, I must own, to find that, in spite of this, I have lowered my own character, and perhaps even that of my profession, by my connection with a publication which I certainly engaged with on very high grounds, and have managed, I think, without dirtying my hands in any paltry matters. If it be so, however, I beg you will tell me; not merely with a view to these present dependencies, but to my whole future life. But this is for talk."

The purity of his hands was so complete, that throughout all the high official honours that awaited him, this objection was never heard of. However disposed for judicial promotion, there were four persons before whom, with his usual generosity, he says he would not like to advance. These were his friends, George Bell, Mr. Thomas Thomson, John Fullerton, and myself.

On the 14th of March, 1829, he came forward at the last public meeting (not connected with his elections) that he ever attended; and it was a magnificent one. It was called to petition in favour of the removal of the Roman Catholic disabilities; and was composed of as many as could get into the assembly room—which could not be much, if at all, fewer than two thousand.* All parties except the one which wished these disabilities perpetuated were represented there, and a Conservative presided. The two most impressive speeches were by Jeffrey and Chalmers. Both were admirable; but more in spirit and in manner than in any originality of thought, which so hackneyed a subject scarcely admitted of. Nothing could be more perfect than the exquisite diction, beautiful articulation, good taste, and generous feeling of the one; or the

* A shilling ought to have been paid for admittance, and about 1700 shillings were received at the door.

burning vehemence of the other. The effect of both was very great. But in a popular assembly, ardour will ever, at the moment, be more impressive than grace. No more powerful emotion was ever produced by words, than at the close of Chalmers's address. Brilliant and glowing as his written pages are, they are cold and dull compared with his spoken intensity. The rough broken voice,—the ungainly form,—the awkward gesture,—the broad dingy face,—gave little indication of what was beneath. But the capacious brow!—and the soul!—*mens agitat molem.*

In a few months after this, an event happened which ended his connection with the Review. Mr. Moncrieff, the Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, was raised to the bench. The deanship is merely a station of honour; but when not lowered by the interference of political or other improper considerations, it is the highest honour of the kind that can be conferred in Scotland. Each election is only for a single year; but he who once succeeds is almost never dispossessed, so that it is the presidency for life, or during the holder's pleasure, of the most important public body in the country. Jeffrey's friends naturally looked to him as Moncrieff's successor; and Mr. Geo. Jos. Bell seems to have written to him advising him to canvass, and even to give up the Review, as a canvassing step. The answer to this was: "If my friends think that a stand should now be made, and that they can make their best stand on me, I am willing to be stood on; and shall be honoured and gratified to be promoted or defeated in their behalf. But I think it becomes me to be passive, or chiefly passive, and most certainly I shall originate or suggest nothing in the cause. 2d. As for the Review, I have an affection for it of old, and I would rather make the money I make by it, in that way, than by the same quantity of work in my profession. At the same time, I have perhaps done it all the good I am likely to do, and the best service I could now render it, probably, would be to put it into younger hands.

3d. If I were *sure* of being made dean by announcing that *I had given up* the Review, I think I would do it at once. But being pretty sure that I shall *not* be dean, whatever I announce, I shall not make any such annunciation."

Accordingly, no such pledge was given. But Mr. John Hope, the Solicitor-General, who had been set up against him, (or been proposed to be so,) withdrew, and on the 2d of July, 1829, Jeffrey was elected unanimously. He says in the preface to his Contributions, that if Mr. Hope had not "generously deferred to my seniority, his perseverance might have endangered the result." It would have done more than endangered it. Considering, in addition to the solicitor's own professional eminence, and the Conservative condition of a majority of the bar, there can be little doubt that his perseverance would have prevented the result, and that he might have taken the place to himself. But he acted on this occasion with the liberality that had marked his conduct in the previous case of Mr. Moncrieff, (Nov. 2d, 1826,) for whose elevation to the dean's chair he made the motion. He also moved in favour of Jeffrey, in a kind and manly speech. At Jeffrey's request, I had the honour of seconding. In his note asking me, he begs me to "say as little ill of me as your conscience will let you. The solicitor means to propose me, but I hope to have the countenance and a good word of one at least of my old friends. I am not very sure that I do wisely in asking this; for I feel more nervous in the prospect of this public ceremony than I can well account for; and though I could stand the eulogies of the public accuser steadily enough, I am not quite sure of being able to maintain my dignity against the testimonies that come from the heart, and go to it."—(29th June, 1829.)

The two previous deans, Mr. Cranstoun, and Mr. Moncrieff, were strong Whigs. But they were great lawyers, and were not implicated, even by one single contribution, in the offences of the Review. Jeffrey was personally

guilty of many of them, and as editor, was held responsible for them all. Yet he was elected. The Faculty did itself great credit by this proceeding, and received great honour in return. He owed his elevation to his professional eminence, to his literary renown, to his undivided personal popularity, and to the liberality of that majority of his brethren who liked him more than they disliked his political principles and those of his work. It showed the improvement of public opinion, and the softening of party hatred.

"It immediately occurred to me, (says he in his preface,) that it was not quite fitting that the official head of a great law corporation should continue to be the conductor of what might be fairly enough represented as in many respects a party journal ; and I consequently withdrew at once, and altogether, from the management." The 98th number, which came out in June, 1829, was the last he edited ; and, excepting three or four papers which he wrote long afterward, the one on the *Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe*, published in October, 1829, was the last he ever furnished as a regular contributor.

The Review then passed into the able hands of its second editor, the late Mr. Macvey Napier.

He had often been advised to make a list of his own contributions, but though not at all desirous of concealing any of them, he treated it as a matter of indifference, and never would take the trouble. I was glad, therefore, when one day, in December, 1840, I found him, on my renewing the proposal, not so averse as he used to be ; and we soon sat down, and began with the first number, and in the course of a week or two we went through the whole work, authenticating all his papers. His memory rarely showed its tenacity more strikingly. His recollection of the articles either wholly or partially his was so assured, that he generally recognised them as soon as he saw the title. If there was a doubt, it was commonly solved by his mentioning, before going farther, some fact, or phrase, or meta-

phor, or striking sentence, or something of this kind, and saying,—“If that be there, it is mine.” His conjecture was almost always confirmed on reading the article, both by finding the test, and by the general revival of his recollection; so that at last all uncertainty was removed. This list, brought down so as to include his four subsequent contributions, amounting to 201 articles, will be found in the Appendix. He said that there might possibly be one or two mistakes, but that he did not think that there were any.

It is impossible, on thus seeing the collected outpourings of his mind, not to be struck by the variety of his matter. Instead of having confined himself to literature, as his prevailing taste for this department has made it sometimes be supposed that he did, there is scarcely a theme that he has not discussed, with all his fertility of view, and all his beauty of style. What other eight volumes by one man, contain such writing, or such mind, on so many and so various of the most delightful and important subjects of human speculation?

On closing the labours of these twenty-seven years, he had a career to look back upon such as never elevated the heart of any one who had instructed the public by periodical address. It is not my business to review the Review; and I am conscious of incapacity to do it. But it is not very difficult to state the grounds on which I think that this was a splendid retrospect.

Independent of special objections to particular articles, the general censures to which the work was exposed were the same in 1829 that they were as soon as its character and objects were disclosed. And certainly it was not for want of warning that what were said to be its errors were persevered in. Its enemies for several years found great comfort in its abuse, which they vented in streams of pamphlets that make curious reading now. Instead of practising the moderation and candour, the absence of

which from the Review is their great complaint, they almost uniformly exceed, by a hundredfold, most of the offences which they ascribe to it. But they are generally kind enough to admonish the wicked editor of the disgrace into which he is falling in the sight of all good men, and of the speedy extinction of his abominable work. Except in the case of the Earl of Lauderdale, I am not aware that any answer was ever made to any of these fulminations, beyond an explanatory page or two in the Review itself.

The favourite censure was of the Review's severity; in which it was said to have a sincerity and a flippancy, which showed that condemnation was its enjoyment; and that its authors sought for distinction, not in the discovery and encouragement of merit, but in the detection and exposure of defects; and that, while rioting in the delight of their power, the interests of the victim were disregarded, and that his agonies only enhanced the ridicule under which he suffered.

This charge is not altogether groundless; but the fault is one that adheres naturally to the position of a reviewer.

There is no offence to an author greater than the seeming contempt of silence, and therefore the very act of publishing is a petition for notice. And the critic, thus invited, assumes the censor's chair, and, concealed, has to examine, and to announce, the character of every book that stands before him for its doom. If the journal be in the hands of men skilled in the analytical art, the reviewer, who has the advantage of coming last, is often better acquainted with the matter of the book than its author; insomuch that, in many cases, the criticism is the abler work of the two. And it is always tolerably certain that there are many more who will, at first, take their opinions idly from the journal, rather than from the more laborious study of the original book. Thus, both from his situation and his talent, the critic, unless he be of a singularly considerate temperament, and on a very cool subject, naturally

imbibes feelings of conscious superiority, not favourable to the exercise of candid judgment. Confidence in his own opinion, and thoughtlessness as to the sensations of authors, especially when he has really no desire to hurt them, are nearly inseparable from his position ; and this tendency is immensely increased by the number of the occasions on which severity, and even scorn, are absolute duties. Then, it does so happen that all human censors do prefer the discovery of faults. Excellence is more easily found out ; and it leads to mere praise. But he who detects a fault, shows his superiority, at least to him who committed it ; and its being a fault, seems to confer a freer license of exposure. The critic therefore makes the most of it, not for the satisfaction of tormenting, but for the luxury of exercising his skill in that science, of which sarcasm and derision are the most popular displays. Blaming and exposing become arts ; in which it is very tempting to excel ; and for which readers are ready to pay more than for better matter. Different critics fall into this habit in different veins, and under different feelings. When Jeffrey gave way to it, it was generally from mere lightness of spirit. Totally devoid of ill-nature, and utterly unconscious of any desire to hurt, he handled the book as a thing to be played with ; without duly considering that the gay and moral pleasantry of Horace might produce as much distress as the declamatory weight of Juvenal. These critical vivacities, however unfortunate, being the natural tendencies of the reviewer's situation, the true question, in appreciating this part of the character of a critical work, is, as to the *excess* in which the tendency has been indulged ?

The answer to this question, in the case of the Edinburgh Review, is triumphant.

In spite of all its severity, there is no work of the kind where applause has been conferred more generously, or with more valuable illustrations of its grounds. Where else will the merits of the great writers, the great invent-

ors, the great patriots, or the great philanthropists, who shone during these twenty-seven years, be found by future ages so enthusiastically recorded? Detached expressions or opinions may be objected to; but, on the whole, the admirers of such eminence can find on no such powerful and judicious praise. If this be the fact, a work dedicated to the examination of the publications of the passing day, and consequently conducted under all the passing influences, may submit to the blame of occasional asperity. The Edinburgh Review incurred this blame at its outset, because its tone was new; and because, contrasted with the placid dotage of its predecessors, it was strong. But in time discussion showed its necessities, and supplied a decisive standard by which the supposed cruelty of this journal may be judged of. Other journals arose. *Which of them has been less cruel? Which of them has exhibited the virtues for the want of which the Edinburgh Review was blamed? Which of them has not surpassed it in all the iniquities of its justice? Which of them has practised less the art of giving pain?*

The literary and scientific errors of the work were sometimes accounted for by being ascribed to the personal antipathies of the editor, and its political ones to his anxiety, from selfishness, to serve the Whig party. These, being charges of unkindness and dishonesty, may be safely left to the refutation afforded by the editor's character. Deducting the ordinary mistakes and exaggerations inseparable from warm discussion, he never published one sentence of his own that did not express his sincere opinion at the time. Had he any personal unkindness toward Sir Walter? Yet whose poetry did he review with less of the partiality of a friend. How many books written by persons he disliked were put into his crucible, yet came out all the brighter for his illustration of their merits! If the hope of personal advantage had affected his political writing, his clear course would have been to have given up

the Review, or to have softened its tone. Nothing could be so bad for his personal interest, even as a politician, as what he did.

Of the charges against Jeffrey personally, none was more absurd or proclaimed with greater perseverance, than his treatment of the Lake Poets ; whom he was said to have persecuted with ungenerous obstinacy. No answer to this can be more graceful or effective than his own : “ I have in my time said petulant and provoking things of Mr. Southey, and such as I would not say now. But I am not conscious that I was ever unfair to his poetry ; and if I have noted what I thought its faults in too arrogant and derisive a spirit, I think I have never failed to give hearty and cordial praise to its beauties—and generally dwelt much more largely on the latter than the former. Few things, at all events, would now grieve me more than to think I might give pain to his many friends and admirers, by reprinting, so soon after his death, any thing which might appear derogatory either to his character or his genius ; and therefore, though I cannot say that I have substantially changed any of the opinions I have formerly expressed as to his writings, I only insert in this publication my review of his last considerable poem, which may be taken as conveying my matured opinion of his merits—and will be felt, I trust, to have done no scanty or unwilling justice to his great and peculiar powers.”—(Contributions, vol. iii. p. 133.)

“ I have spoken in many places rather too bitterly and confidently of the faults of Mr. Wordsworth’s poetry ; and forgetting that, even on my own view of them, they were but faults of taste, or venial self-partiality, have sometimes visited them, I fear, with an asperity which should be reserved for objects of moral reprobation. If I were now to deal with the whole question of his poetical merits, though my judgment might not be substantially different, I hope

I should repress the greater part of these vivacities of expression; and indeed so strong has been my feeling in this way, that considering how much I have always loved many of the attributes of his genius, and how entirely I respect his character, it did at first occur to me whether it was quite fitting that, in my old age and his, I should include in this publication any of those critiques which may have formerly given pain or offence to him or his admirers. But when I reflected that the mischief, if there really ever was any, was long ago done, and that I still retain, in substance, the opinions which I should now like to have more gently expressed, I felt that to omit all notice of them on the present occasion might be held to import a retractation which I am as far as possible from intending; or even be represented as a very shabby way of backing out of sentiments which should either be manfully persisted in, or openly renounced, and abandoned as untenable."—(Contributions, vol. iii. p. 233.)

Since, in the cases of these two most eminent of the school, he regrets his occasional unguardedness of language, but retains his opinions, the only thing to be considered is, whether the opinions be sound? This, however, is a mere matter of taste. But supposing them to be unsound, it is absolutely ludicrous to say that his errors are so gross as to imply unkindness,—which is the principal part of the charge. Where is the best stated praise of what is good in these poets to be found? Unquestionably in the Edinburgh Review. Accompanied, no doubt, with severe condemnation of their supposed faults. But is it not a fact, that, in so far as continued circulation is a criterion of permanent excellence, time is every day confirming almost all his poetical judgments? and particularly his judgments on the Lake Poets? Southey himself anticipates the day in which his admirers, though the wisest, are scarcely to exceed a dozen. *What poet whom Jeffrey condemns continues a favourite with the public, except in*

the works, or in the passages, or in the qualities, which he applauds?

The hatred of the political opinions of the work, is, in its original intensity, scarcely comprehensible now. The present age thinks with composure of such things as Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform, because they are settled. But forty years ago they were dreams;—favourite visions with philosophers;—but not within the horizon of any practical imagination. When those, therefore, whose ascendency, or whose conceptions of public tranquillity, were involved in the unquestioning belief that whatever was was right, saw their ark touched, they were struck with horror, and could impute what alarmed them to nothing but wickedness and intentional mischief. In these circumstances no prudence could have disarmed hostility. But, in place of uniform prudence, there did occur those occasional indiscretions, without which what periodical criticism of living things will ever be conducted? The irritability of authors, the terrors of honest Toryism, and the devotion of churches to themselves, might all have been sometimes more gently treated. Indifference to the prejudices of these parties raised more angry enemies to the Review than were raised by the deeper offences of its doctrines.

Its political offences all resolve into its despair of the war, and its recommendation of popular and economical reforms. It would be idle to answer objections which merely amount to this, that the objectors differ from the party objected to. For every man by whom the public opinions of the Edinburgh Review were condemned, there was one other man, if not ten, by whom they were applauded. Discounting zealots on both sides, and appealing to those of impartial judgment, the great majority will concur in regretting occasional error, but in admiring general wisdom; and in acknowledging that the political improprieties of the Review were only such as always ad-

here to controversy, and that no party work ever urged its views with greater intelligence and purity. Since the editor and his associates thought the war hopeless, it was their duty to do what they could, by argument, to convince the public that it ought to be brought to a close. Their opinion was that of many of the wisest men, and the best patriots, that we had. They must be judged of as at the time, and not after the bubble of Napoleon's ambition burst by its own expansion. Since they believed that the success of the Whigs was necessary for the safety of the country, ought they to have concealed this conviction, instead of advancing and anticipating the wisdom of coming parliaments?

In judging of the value of all such charges, as against the editor of a review, too little consideration is commonly given to the very peculiar position that he occupies. He is responsible for all that the work may contain, in certain senses, and to certain effects; but not at all in the same way that any honourable writer is for what he gives forth as his own composition, and as the expression of his own thoughts. No editor, depending on the co-operation of numerous contributors, can be so. For even as controlling others, though armed with a pretty strong discretion, he is never altogether absolute. “We are growing (to Horner, 20th July, 1810) too factious. I admit it, and it mortifies me as much as any one to think that we are. But you judge rightly of my limited power, and of the overgrown privileges of some of my subjects. I am but a feudal monarch at best, and my throne is overshadowed by the presumptuous crests of my nobles. However, I issue laudable edicts, inculcating moderation and candour, and hope in time to do some little good. A certain spice of aristocracy in my own nature withdraws me from the common expedient of strengthening myself by a closer union with the lower orders; but I would give a great deal for a few chieftains of a milder and more disciplined character.”

Bating these slight exceptions, we can only estimate our permanent obligations to the Edinburgh Review, when Jeffrey retired from it, by placing ourselves on the eminence of 1829, and looking back on the space between that point and the month of October, 1802. It is nearly impossible even to count the useful intervening changes. A few of the more material ones stand out, and will for ever display themselves, as the great marks that attest the progress of the age. In 1802, dread of the people, and a stern resistance of improvement, because it implied change, were the necessary, and often the only, qualifications for favour with the party in possession of power. The rights of religious toleration were so little understood, that several millions of the population were subjected, on account of their creed, or their forms, to various important disabilities. We traded in human beings, under the protection of a great party, and of the law. Popular education was so utterly unknown to England, that the ignorance of the lower orders was considered as a positive recommendation. Ireland was in a state of disorderly barbarism; and, because it was peopled by Papists, this was thought its natural and its deserved condition. There was much hardness or indifference in public opinion; showing itself particularly in the severity of our dealings with all we had to punish or control,—the sailor or soldier, the criminal, the insolvent, the lunatic, and the young. The foundations of many parts of our public policy were hollow; or, where solid, what had been raised upon them was unsound; so that facility of revision was what was required; yet these defects were exactly what were successfully maintained to be the best part of our policy. The mere elements of political economy were very sparingly known, except to a very small class. Some of the physical sciences, such as geology, were only arising, and all of them admitted of great improvement. The literary horizon was but beginning to glow with the brilliancy of its later

great era. The public mind was in the bud; but, if not cherished, the blossom and the fruit might have been destroyed, or long delayed.

In the year 1829, all this was altered or mitigated. The alteration from youth to manhood, in an individual, is not more complete than the change that had taken place in the nation. That miserable horror of change, which must in time reduce any country to idiocy, was duly abated; and novelty, though it never of itself became a recommendation, ceased to be a reproach, and conclusive. The Protestant dissenter and the Papist were emancipated. Nothing effectual was yet done for popular education; but the existing evil had been exposed; and we heard little of the praises of ignorance. The sad insanities of Ireland, which may still baffle a century of sound legislation, were not cured; but the folly of dealing with that as a doomed island, and the duty of trying to relieve its miseries, though self-inflicted, by justice and prudence, and the hope of the ultimate success of wise measures even on that people, came to be the habitual sentiments of parliaments and of public men. Our great crime of slavery was put down; and the many curses by which it will ever revenge itself upon any people that practise it were avoided. The light was admitted into many abuses, and many defects, in many parts of our polity, not excepting the fiscal and the legal, the most inscrutable and the best guarded of them all. The heart of the nation was softened. All the haunts, whether of penal or corrective control, of innocent or of guilty misery, were reformed by that pity which would have entered them in vain, but for the improved humanity of the age. Commercial and kindred questions came to be solved by an application of the economical science to which they belong, and which lost by discussion much of its mystery, and became familiar to the ordinary thoughts of ordinary people. That extension of the elective franchise, without which it now seems certain that revolution could

not have been long delayed, had not actually taken place ; but it was close at hand. Campbell, Crabbe, Southey, Scott, Byron, Moore, and Wordsworth, had risen, and shone, and nearly passed away. But not till the true principles of poetical composition had been examined and applied to each. There never was a period in which such numerous and splendid contributions, moral and physical, were made to the treasury of public knowledge ; and all of these were now discussed with no general and feeble expressions of praise or of blame, but with a degree of independence and talent, entering into the very heart of the matter, that gave people of all sides an assurance of being adequately instructed.

If there be a person who thinks that the condition of the people and of our institutions and system was better in 1802 than in 1829, and who, consequently, if he could, would go back to the earlier period, that person, of course, can feel no gratitude to the Edinburgh Review. But whoever exults in the dropping away of so many fetters, and in the improvement of so many parts of our economy, and in the general elevation of the public mind, must connect all these with the energy and intelligence of this journal. Not that many of these changes, or perhaps all of them, would not have taken place although this work had never existed ; for, to a certain extent, they arose naturally out of the advance of a free community. But they certainly would not have occurred so soon, or so safely. There is scarcely one abuse that has been overthrown, which, supported as every one was, might not have still survived, nor a right principle that has been adopted which might not have been dangerously delayed, had it not been for the well-timed vigour and ability of this Review. It was the established champion of the measures, and principles, and feelings that have prevailed ; and the glory of the victory cannot be withheld from the power that prepared the warriors who fought the battle.

It was not merely that the journal expounded and defended right principles and objects. Its prerogative was higher. It taught the public to think. It opened the people's eyes. It gave them, periodically, the most animated and profound discussions on every interesting subject, that the greatest intellects in the kingdom could supply. The mere mention of the names of a few of those who addressed the public through this organ, during Jeffrey's editorship, is of itself sufficient to attest the high character of the instruction given, and to guaranty its safety. How could a periodical work be but magnificent, of which it could be said that it was carried on by such men as the following, all in the full force of their powers, and each zealous on his favourite subject, *viz.* :—Jeffrey, Smith, Horner, Brougham, Thomas Brown, Walter Scott, John Playfair, Hallam, Malcolm Laing, George Ellis, Wilberforce, Lord Melbourne, John Allen, Coleridge, Malthus, Payne Knight, Professor Lesley, D. Mackintosh, Daniel Ellis, Moore, Dr. John Gordon, Palgrave, Leigh Hunt, Romilly, Foscolo, Dr. Chalmers, Professor Wilson, J. R. Macculloch, Empson, Dr. Arnold, Sir William Hamilton, Macaulay, Carlyle, Robert Grant, Hazlitt, Alexr. (Sanscrit) Hamilton, Thomas Campbell, Peter Elmsley, Phillimore, James Mill, Macvey Napier, Chenevix, Bloomfield, Sir H. Parnell, General William Napier. Many other bright stars might be added; but the sky that blazes with these constellations is bright enough. Their influence in illuminating the age may be ascertained by every man for himself. Let any regular reader of this Review recollect, and say how many of his opinions, and of the reasons for them, were formed from its successive articles; and how largely the feelings and principles that he now owns were breathed into him by its general spirit.

Thus the Review soared, from the very first, into a higher region, and became itself the principal work of the day. And while none of the successors it produced have found it expedient to avoid its form or its professional principles,

all of them have prospered or failed just according to the success with which they have imitated its talent and independence. Read with admiration in every spot where English is known, it was crowned by the only remaining honour of being proscribed by every government to which free inquiry was dangerous.

Jeffrey's value as *editor* was incalculable. He had not only to revise and arrange each number after its parts were brought together, but before he got this length, he, like any other person in that situation, had much difficult and delicate work to perform. He had to discover, and to train authors; to discern what truth and the public mind required; to suggest subjects; to reject, and, more offensive still, to improve contributions; to keep down absurdities; to infuse spirit; to excite the timid; to repress violence; to soothe jealousies; to quell mutinies; to watch times; and all this in the morning of the reviewing day, before experience had taught editors conciliatory firmness, and contributors reasonable submission. He directed and controlled the elements he presided over with a master's judgment. There was not one of his associates who could have even held these elements together for a single year. The merit of getting so many writers to forego the ordinary jealousies of authors and of parties, and to write invisibly, and without the fame of individual and avowed publication, in the promotion of a work made up of unconnected portions, and assailed by such fierce and various hostility, is due to him entirely. He acquired it by his capacity of discussing almost any subject, in a conciliatory spirit, with almost any author; by the wisdom with which his authority was exercised; by the infusion of his personal kindness into his official intercourse; and his liberal and gentleman-like demeanour. Inferior to these excellences, but still important, was his dexterity in revising the writings of others. Without altering the general tone or character of the composition, he had great skill in leaving out defective

ideas or words, and in so aiding the original by lively or graceful touches, that reasonable authors were surprised and charmed on seeing how much better they looked than they thought they would.

As a *writer*, his merits were of the very highest order. It may be doubted if there be a critical work in the English language, including such a variety of subject, superior to his Selected Contributions. But these are not nearly one-half of what he gave the Review, and many of his finest articles are omitted. The general peculiarities of his productions are to be found in their reasoning wisdom and their graceful composition. Amid all the enlightened minds and all the powerful writers, around him, he never fails to shine so brightly, that there is no other person the extinction of whose contributions would so deeply alter the character of the work. Whatever influence it had upon the age, that influence is to be more ascribed to him than to any other individual connected with it. This was not the result of his genius alone. The most gratifying part of his triumph is to be ascribed to his taste for happiness and goodness, and his love of promoting them. How delightful, because how true, is the statement of the feelings with which, after an interval of fourteen years from his retirement, he looks back on the object and the tendency of his personal contributions! "If I might be permitted farther to state, in what particular department, and generally on account of what I should most wish to claim a share of those merits, I should certainly say that it was by having constantly endeavoured to combine ethical precepts with literary criticism, and earnestly sought to impress my readers with a sense, both of the close connection between sound intellectual attainments and the higher elements of duty and enjoyment; and of the just and ultimate subordination of the former to the latter. The praise, in short, to which I aspire, and to merit which I am conscious that my efforts were most constantly directed, is,

that I have, more uniformly and earnestly than any preceding critic, made the moral tendencies of the works under consideration a leading subject of discussion, and neglected no opportunity, in reviews of poems and novels, as well as of graver productions, of elucidating the true constituents of human happiness and virtue; and combating those besetting prejudices and errors of opinion which appear so often to withhold men from the path of their duty, or to array them in foolish and fatal hostility to each other. I cannot, of course, do more, in this place, than *intimate* this proud claim. But for the proof, or at least the explanation of it, I think I may venture to refer to the greater part of the papers that follow."—(Preface to the Contributions.)

I return from this (too long) digression, to the narrative of the facts of his life.

There was no educational establishment, except those for the education of the poor, in which he took a greater interest than in the Edinburgh Academy. This is a proprietary day-school, instituted with the view of raising the quality and the tone of education, in its higher branches, for boys of all classes. It was opened in 1824; Sir Harry Moncrieff invoking the Divine aid, and Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Henry Mackenzie senior, the patriarch of Scottish literature, addressing the assemblage. It had long the benefit of the powerful head-mastership of the Archdeacon John Williams, who now presides over the establishment at Llandovery; and it at present flourishes under the charge of the Rev. John Hannah, of Oxford. It has realized all the expectations of its founders; and, besides being indisputably the best school in this country, it has indirectly improved all the other schools of the same class. If a correct account were taken, it would probably be found that, independently of other colleges, more of its pupils have gained honours at Oxford and Cambridge, than all the pupils of all the other schools in Scotland since the Edin-

burgh Academy began. Jeffrey was one of the original proprietors, and afterward a director; and on the 30th of July, 1830, he presided, and delivered the prizes, at the annual exhibition. No addresses to boys could be marked by better judgment, or better feelings, than those delivered by him on this occasion. Thoroughly acquainted with their minds, he said every thing that could arouse and direct their ambition.

Relieved of the anxious and incessant labour of the Review, he expected that what remained of his life would be passed in comparative repose. But in December, 1830, the Whigs came into office, and he, by pre-eminence, was appointed Lord-Advocate. This, in one unexpected moment, changed his whole habits, prospects, and avocations. He had hitherto lived entirely in Edinburgh, or its neighbourhood, enjoying his fame and popularity with his private friends,—an honourable and happy life. But he had now to interrupt his profession; to go into Parliament at alarming pecuniary risk; to forego the paradise of Craigmrook, and his delicious vacations; to pass many weary months, and these summer ones, in London; to be no longer the easy critic of measures, but their responsible conductor; and to be involved, without official training, in all the vexations of official business. These calamities he would have avoided if he could. But being assured that his party and the public were concerned, he submitted. After stating the dangers of his new situation to his niece, Miss Brown, he adds, “Now I do not say this in the way of whining, but only to let you see how good reason I have for being sincerely sick and sorry at an elevation for which so many people are envying, and thinking me the luckiest and most elevated of mortals for having attained.”—(3d December, 1830.)

He makes in this letter another very natural reflection: “Will you not come to see us before we go? You will find me glorious in a flounced silk gown, and long

cravat,—sending men to the gallows, and persecuting smugglers for penalties,—and every day in a wig, and most days with buckles on my shoes! I wish my father had lived to see this,—chiefly, I hope, for the pleasure it would have given him; but partly too, I will avow, for the triumph I should have had over all his sad predictions of the ruin I was bringing on my prospects by my Whig politics, and of the bitter repentance I should one day feel for not following his Tory directions—though it was but a hazard, after all; and he had a fair chance of being right, as to worldly matters at least;—and so good night.”

There is no situation native to Scotland of greater trust or dignity than that of Lord-Advocate. Yet, as it is dealt with, it is not an office that a sensible man, considering his own interest alone, would desire to have. In so far as each is the legal adviser of the crown in their respective countries, the Lord-Advocate is in Scotland something like the Attorney-General in England. But, practically, their positions are very different. The total official emoluments of the Lord-Advocate are, on an average, not above £8000 a year; in addition to which, his only other reward, or hope of reward, consists in the chance of judicial promotion. His direct patronage is exceedingly slender, and for the patron, patronage is more of a torture than of a reward. For these considerations, he has to obtain a seat, or seats, in Parliament; which, between December, 1830, and May, 1832, cost Jeffrey about £10,000. Then he has to go to London, and return so often, or to remain so long, that his practice is greatly injured, and generally extinguished. And as there is no Scotch secretary, and Scotch matters, however simple, are very apt to be taken up as mysteries by those who do not choose to understand them, the general business of the country is thrown upon the Lord-Advocate, to an extent that, if attempted toward an Attorney-General, would quash him in a week. Horner says truly, (in 1804,) that the Lord-Advocate, “in the management

of elections and general assemblies, and town-councils, &c., has been hitherto no better than a sub-clerk in the Treasury,"—which he is of opinion was an unnecessary degradation.—(Memoirs, i. 269.) And this is not only the use to which the Lord-Advocate is still far too much applied by government; but every other party fancies that he is entitled to use him in the same way; and to hold him responsible, beyond his correct legal line, not only for the measures that he promotes, but for those that he opposes. If duly supported by his masters, he might withstand all this. But they, commonly knowing and caring little about the matter, have seldom much scruple in consulting their own comforts, and in trying to conciliate members, by the sacrifice of their own officer; who cannot defend himself or his measure as an independent man, but must speak or be silent according to orders. The root of all this discord, vexation, and inefficiency, lies in expecting a professional gentleman not only to conduct affairs to which he has been accustomed, but to begin to act suddenly as a statesman, in matters to which he is necessarily new. This might have passed formerly, when there was very little Scotch public business, and the people were nobody, and the principle was, no change; but it is absurd now. It has long been complained of by the people of this country, that no attention is bestowed on Scotch measures by Parliament. This complaint is just. The evil arises partly from the ignorance of the Houses of what any thing Scotch means, and partly from their indifference about any thing desired by a portion of the empire that is too small and too quiet to create alarm; but still more, from the almost ostentatious disregard by government of matters which, at the worst, can only cause a small and momentary mutiny among fifty-three not loquacious members. The only remedy is, the appointment of some person, probably holding another office, to manage the general, apart from the legal, affairs of the country, avowedly and responsibly; or, if this duty

be kept upon the Lord-Advocate, to give him due support, and far more authority. As it is, if an eminent lawyer, without parliamentary ambition, and with no taste for sweltering in London, but making a respectable income, and living at home in peace, wishes to be sleepless all night, and hot all day, and not half so useful as he might be, let him become Lord-Advocate. The evil is aggravated by the consideration that the performance of his proper duties alone, while it would give ample occupation, would be agreeable and important. In addition to his being the legal adviser of the crown and of government, no man can be idle who takes the management of our whole criminal business; provided it be continued to be managed so as to exhibit a conclusive precedent, and a model, for taking the duty of penal prosecution out of the hands of inferior officers and interested private parties, and committing it to the charge of a high and responsible public accuser. In August, 1842, Jeffrey had a conference with the late Earl Grey, then Prime Minister, in which, as Jeffrey states it, his lordship “promised to make some arrangement for relieving my office of a great part of its *political* duties, and reducing it to its true legal character, and something is even in progress for the practical accomplishment of this.” But to this hour nothing has been done.

He was of opinion that, in the particular circumstances of the Scotch Bar, where there are few official honours, the situations of Dean and of Lord-Advocate, or Solicitor-general, should not be monopolized by one person. Acting on this principle, he resigned the deanship—which on the 17th of December, 1831, was conferred on Mr. Hope, who had so handsomely forgone his claim on the previous vacancy.

Jeffrey was fortunate in this, that when he came upon the parliamentary stage, he was not, at first, distracted by variety or perplexity of objects. For upwards of fifty years the Whig party in Scotland had, without one moment's diversity or relaxation, been demanding parliamentary and

burgh reform, as the two definite things that for this country were all in all. By the first, they meant that, under whatever safeguards, the constitutional principle of popular representation should be extended to Scotland; by the second, that an end should be put to the insulting absurdity of all town-councils being self-elected. These were also English objects—in the wake of which the Scotch ones were sure to follow; but the Scotch cases were infinitely stronger. Putting down these two evils was essential and preliminary to any good whatever being done to this country. Though the new Lord-Advocate, therefore, had soon no want of lesser projects and distractions, these were the two forts that had first to be gained.

Hence, though scarcely any Lord-Advocate had entered public life in a more important or hazardous season, there have been few whose official proceedings it is less necessary to follow. He was only in office about three years and a half, and it took nearly the whole of that time to get these two measures carried. Their adjustment to Scotland presented its own difficulties, and gave rise to its own discussions; but such details are unimportant after they are settled; and in the main schemes the northern part of the island was identified with the southern. The principle of reform was no sooner recognised by government and the legislature, than it was succeeded by its practical applications—which implied a plentiful crop of proposals; but, though within the first projection of these changes, he was withdrawn before he could become officially responsible for their success, or their defeat. No important improvement, therefore, of the Lord-Advocate's own, did or could distinguish his official reign. His merit resolves into the manner in which he managed the two great measures that were committed in a certain degree to his charge; and this admits of no explanation that could be interesting, or perhaps even intelligible, to those who were not engaged in the conflict.

Though he would much rather have stayed at home, he had never any aversion to a visit to London. He had many friends there in all classes, among whom he was very popular; and he delighted to whet his intellect against the great intellects of the capital, and to observe the varied society to which his reputation and his conversational powers introduced him. Whenever he was there, he wrote to me almost daily, owing partly to my being solicitor-general under him. These letters contain lively accounts of all his proceedings and feelings. The interesting persons he met with—his social parties—his occasional retreats to the country—every shadow of change in public affairs—striking parliamentary occurrences and speeches—the whole incidents of the London scene—are given with a vivacity and talent which Lady M. W. Montagu might have envied. But these communications can be only very sparingly disclosed. They have already, in many places, become immaterial and obscure; in others they touch living individuals; and in many, and these the most valuable, they imply confidence. But in so far as they are merely personal, they enable me to let him describe those personal occurrences himself, with which alone I have now to deal.

Within a few weeks after his elevation, he was returned member for what were termed the Forfarshire Burghs; on which occasion he had the honour of being pelted by what he calls “*The brutes of Forfar*,” being a gang of blackguards who thought that this was a good way of promoting the cause of his opponent. But there was a flaw in the proceedings which soon unseated him. He had only got the return by the vote of the Dundee delegate, and this burgh having been previously disfranchised, it was ultimately decided that it had no right to vote. But as the judgment of disfranchisement was under appeal, he was advised to take his seat till the appeal should be disposed of.

And so he was in office, and in Parliament. “I come

into public life in stormy weather, and under no very enviable auspices, except that our *cause*, and our *meaning*, are good.”—(To Richardson, 27th July, 1831.)

The Reform Bill was propounded on the 1st of March, 1831. Three days thereafter he made his first speech. “I have proposed to speak twice, but could never get in. I think I must to-night. But not a word has yet been said as to Scotland, nor do I think the House would bear three sentences on that insignificant subject. I must therefore go into the general question.”—(To me, 4th March, 1831.) He did so in a speech, of which Mackintosh says, “Macaulay and Stanley have made two of the finest speeches ever spoken in Parliament. Jeffrey’s, though not quite so debating and parliamentary, was quite as remarkable for argument and eloquence. No man of fifty-five* ever began a new career so well.”—(Memoirs, ii. 479.) This speech was published immediately afterward, at the special request of government, and made a strong impression on those who really wished to understand the question. It is certainly general, and too much above the common grapple of parliamentary contention; but out of the whole speeches that were delivered throughout the two years that the question was discussed, no better argument in favour of the principle and necessity of the measure, on its general grounds, is extractable. Still, as a debating speech, it fell below the expectations both of his friends and of himself; and the chief cause to which he used to ascribe the disappointment, was his constant dread, on his throat’s account, of the physical effort of speaking.

On the 17th of March, the House of Lords affirmed the judgment disfranchising Dundee, and this left him little chance with the committee. “The Chancellor has affirmed Dundee. So that card is lost, and we are all the worse for the committee. I think things look ominous on the

* He should have said above fifty-seven.

whole with me ; and I have little other comfort than that I always anticipated a bad result, and went into the matter deliberately, and with my mind made up to the worst. I only hope I shall not be found frivolous, and vexatious, and saddled with the enemy's costs, and that I shall escape disqualification by bribery."—(To me, 17th March, 1834.) He soon struck his colours, and was unseated. "Rutherford, I believe, has told you the tragic history of my committee. I bear the result, as I am bound to do, manfully; chiefly, I believe, because I foresaw the likelihood of it from the hour that I first entered on my canvass, and have never much expected any thing else. It is plain, however, that it will never do to make a poor Scotch lawyer pay his own way into parliament three times in one year."—(To me, 28th March, 1831.)

Lord Fitzwilliam let him have his burgh of Malton ; for which he was elected on the 6th of April. His journey there was without Mrs. Jeffrey and his daughter, and therefore it seems to have made him pensive. "Here I am, near halfway to Edinburgh, and yet not on my way to Edinburgh ! Oh ! this lovely view on the *home* road brings that home so painfully before me, and gives such a pull at the heart, that it requires all admonitions of duty and ambition, and every thing, to prevent me from running on desperately down a steep place, and landing at Craigcrook. I left town yesterday early, and got to Lord Milton's to dinner, where I stayed till this morning ; a very fine old place, and a most agreeable family of the quiet, natural, benevolent English aristocracy. I am afraid we have nothing of the sort in Scotland, and yet in England I could rather say it is the most common character of the first rank. I am on my road, you are aware, for Malton, where I shall be at mid-day to-morrow ; and I hope elected on Wednesday or Thursday. I must actually visit six hundred people, it seems, and go to the open market-place on a staid horse, and make a discourse from the saddle, under

the canopy of heaven, rain or fair weather. This is penalty enough, I think, without having to pay £500 for feeding this punctilious constituency." "It has been a long lonely day, and I feel something desolate in the solitude of mine inn. It was very bright and cheery, however, and the green hedges and fields full of bleating lambs were soothing after the long fever of London. I have not had so much time to recollect myself since I left home."—(To me, Ferrybridge, 5th April, 1831.)

He was elected on the 6th of April, but within a fortnight Parliament was dissolved. This event was the consequence of ministers, after a debate of two nights, being in a minority of about eight, on a motion by General Gascoigne, that the number of the members of the House of Commons be not *diminished*. Jeffrey never spoke so indignantly as he did against the conduct of most of the Scotch members on this occasion. If the *then* existing number of the members could not be diminished, no more members could be gained for Scotland or Ireland; and the representatives of these countries were warned "*emphatically*" by government, that, by supporting this motion they extinguished all hope of obtaining their additional members. "Ireland (Jeffrey writes) was far more true to duty," but the opposition Scotch members all voted for the motion, "and in fact decided the question." The view of these persons was, that throwing the Reform Bill out, was, in their opinion, more important than obtaining more members for Scotland, and this does not seem very unreasonable. But Jeffrey is anxious that their "*unspeakable baseness* should be known and proclaimed in Scotland;" and I mention this as almost the solitary, but rather a refreshing exception to the usual gentleness of his political malediction.

After mentioning the plots and speculations connected with the sudden close of the attempt to work reform out of the unreformed Parliament, he says: "It was a beautiful, rosy, dead calm morning, when we broke up a little

before five to-day ; and I took three pensive turns along the solitude of Westminster Bridge ; admiring the sharp clearness of St. Paul's, and all the city spires soaring up in a cloudless sky, the orange red light that was beginning to play on the trees of the Abbey, and the old windows of the speaker's house, and the flat, green mist of the river floating upon a few lazy hulks on the tide, and moving low under the arches. It was a curious contrast with the long previous imprisonment in the stifling roaring House, amidst dying candles, and every sort of exhalation."—(To Mr. Thos. Thomson, 20th April, 1831.)

Parliament was prorogued on the 22d of April, "after a scene of bellowing, and roaring, and gnashing of teeth, on the part of the adversary, in both Houses, which it was almost frightful to look at," and next day it was dissolved.

He was naturally ambitious to represent his native city. But believing it to be hopeless under the system then existing, he would not have made the attempt, had it not been that, without his knowledge, a canvass was begun for him, which he did not think it proper to resist. Its result was perfectly descriptive of what was formerly called election in this country. His opponent was a very respectable gentleman called Dundas, in whose favour, however, I believe that no body beyond the town-council, came publicly forward. Almost all the public bodies petitioned the council in favour of Jeffrey, and a petition to the same effect was voted at a public meeting of the inhabitants, on a Saturday, about three o'clock ; which petition was signed by next Monday evening by about 17,400 persons. On the succeeding day, being Tuesday, the 3d of May, 1831, the thirty-one or thirty-two individuals composing the town-council met in a room, to choose the member. They began by reading all these applications ; and then, by a majority of seventeen to fourteen, elected Mr. Dundas. This was the last general election at which any Scotch town-council had it in its power to perform the elective farce.

He was chosen for Malton again toward the beginning of June.

Being blamed, a little after this, by some who did not duly consider his situation, for want of decision, and for conceding too much to artful opponents, he defended himself by saying, “A thousand thanks for your hints as to my infirmities. You might have made them twice as bad with perfect safety. I am rather afraid to promise amendment, but I boldly promise never to be moved to any thing but gratitude by having the course of amendment pointed out to me.” “When the decision rests with myself, I ought probably to be more prompt and decided. But when I have in substance only to propose and report for others, I rather think that I ought to hear all, and discuss with all. And I know that many people have complained that I do not discuss enough, and that I am too peremptory and intractable, and I have even received hints to this effect from the minority, to whom the dissatisfied have carried their supplications.” “It is very well for you and —— to say that you adhere to the original arrangement of the bill, and that all the objections to it are nonsense. I must hear and discuss all those objections, and I cannot say to the minority that they are nonsense, for they are very much moved by them, and want me to obviate them by more decisive arguments than can always be produced.”— (To me, 23d June, 1831.)

Notwithstanding all this, the scold was not ill deserved. His own constant sincerity and reasonableness made him always incredulous of the opposite qualities in others ; and hence his having more charity for cunning enemies than toleration for honest friends, was an infirmity that too often beset him.

On the 1st of July, 1831, he brought in the Scotch Reform Bill, “with a very few words of explanation. I was strictly enjoined to avoid going into any discussion, and indeed *had a written order from —— to move for*

leave without saying a single word.”—(To me, 2d July, 1831.)

Politically the two bills were the same. They differed only in phraseology and machinery. But there was a short period during the preparation of the Scotch one, when there was an imagination of making our franchise higher by five, or even by ten pounds than that for England, which was supported by some of the leading reformers in this country, and a fifteen-pound franchise had, at one time, the countenance even of the Lord-Advocate. This was not because he or they thought the English ten-pound qualification too low; but because they thought that raising it for Scotland would facilitate the passing of the Scotch bill, and that, for this country, a fifty, or even a hundred-pound franchise was at least better than none. They were wrong even in this view, which was vehemently resisted by others, and by none with more effective vigour than by Sir John H. Dalrymple;* and government settled the matter on the principle that the franchise must, in this respect, be the same in both kingdoms.

Giving an account of the second night's debate on the second reading of the English bill, he says: “No division last night, as I predicted, and not a very striking debate. A curious series of prepared speeches, by men who do not speak regularly, and *far* better expressed than nine-tenths of the good speeches, but languid and inefficient from the air of preparation, and the want of nature and authority with which they were spoken. There was but one exception, and it was a brilliant one. I mean *Macaulay*, who surpassed his former appearance in closeness, fire, and vigour, and very much improved the effect of it by a more steady and graceful delivery. It was prodigiously cheered, as it deserved, and I think puts him clearly at the head of the great speakers, if not the debaters, of the House.”

* Now Earl of Stair.

“ I once meant to have said something, but I now think it impossible. Besides, Mackintosh and Macaulay have taken all my ideas, and I cannot stoop to reclaim them; but we shall see. It is very hot, though very beautiful; and would be the most delicious weather in the world at Craigerook, or Loch Lomond, to which last region I wander oftenest in my dreams. We have not been very dissipated lately. We were at a grand party at the Staffords’ the other night, and I have had two or three more cabinet dinners. The most agreeable are Lord Grey’s, where there are always ladies, and we were very gay there last Sunday. I am still as much in love with Althorpe and most of his colleagues as ever, and feel proud and delighted with their frankness, cheerfulness, and sweet-blooded courage.”—(To me, 6th July, 1831.)

He frequently met with Mr. Wordsworth this spring; and as some people fancy that he had a rude unkindness toward all the Lakers, it is proper to mention that Wordsworth and he, whenever they happened to be in each other’s company, were apparently friends. There was certainly no want of friendly feeling on Jeffrey’s part; nor, it is to be hoped, on Mr. Wordsworth’s, though possibly it was somewhat chilled by the recollection of what he may have supposed to be past injustice. But if he had any such thoughts, he had too much kindness and politeness to show them. In a letter to Mrs. Echersall, (27th March, 1831,) Jeffrey says: “ I dined yesterday at Mackintosh’s, with Wordsworth, the poet, and Shiel, the Irish orator, and several other remarkable persons. Wordsworth and I were great friends. He and Empson and I stayed two good hours after everybody else had gone, and did not come home till near two.” Giving an account of the same meeting in another letter, he says: “ Did I tell you that I met Wordsworth at Mackintosh’s last week, and talked with him in a party of four till two in the morning? He is not in the very least Lakish now, or even in any degree

poetical, but rather a hard and a sensible worldly sort of a man.”—(To me, 30th March, 1831.)

Nobody seems to have struck him with such admiration as Lord Althorpe. “There is something to me quite delightful in his calm, clumsy, courageous, immutable probity and well-meaning, and it seems to have a charm for everybody.”—(To me, 13th February, 1831.)

He refreshed himself during these turmoils by as many retreats to the country as he could make. “I am just going to a conference with Melbourne at the Home Office, which has forced me to give up the refreshment of a rural day at Greenwich, which I had promised myself, and for the sake of which I had declined all engagements this Saturday. But he has maliciously named four o’clock, and cut through all our innocent schemes. These are the things which give one most the feeling of bondage.”—(To me, 16th July, 1831.)

He spoke on one of the stages of the bill on the 15th of July, 1831. “I spoke a little last night, but my voice was too weak for so full and stirring a House. I have always said that I was most afraid of that infirmity; and unless they are unusually quiet, I am aware that I cannot make myself generally heard; which is very provoking.”—(To me, 16th July, 1831.)

In September, 1831, he moved the second reading of the Scotch Bill in a speech which I heard, and I was not struck with any vocal deficiency; but the House, to be sure, was perfectly quiet. It was an excellent speech, and very well received. But he was plainly under great restraint, and, except in sense and clearness, it was little calculated to give strangers any idea of his powers.

He began to suffer soon after this from an attack, which confined him for several weeks, and required a painful operation. “Tell —— that I am no better, but that I bear my sufferings like a lamb, though I cannot help bleating a little now and then. I have lost quantities of blood, and a

good deal of flesh, and all to no purpose, and have come to the creed that continual pain is a far worse evil than a bad conscience, a bad character, or even disappointment in love; to say nothing of the more ideal ills of a bad government, a bad climate, or an empty purse. I beg the aid of your prayers, and am always yours affectionately.”
—(To me, 3d October, 1831.)

Yet even in this situation, his humanity alarmed him for the consequences of the bill being thrown out by the Peers. “For God’s sake keep the people quiet in Scotland. I have written edifying letters to the sheriffs of the manufacturing counties, and some additional troops have, on my earnest request, been sent among us. Nothing in the world would do such fatal mischief as riot and violence, ending, as it *now* must do, in lavish bloodshed—from which my soul recoils. I am suffering more pain than I could wish to an anti-reformer.” “I am very much reduced in flesh and strength; but feeling my head and my heart whole enough in my intervals of pain. It has been a sharp martyrdom; but it is shabby in me disturbing my kind friends so much about it, and the expressions in your letter make me almost scorn myself for distressing you. It is far more cheering to me to think of you, gay and comfortable, than even for a moment sad on my account.”
—(To me, 15th October, 1831.)

Parliament was prorogued on the 20th of October; but he was too ill to come home, and in the beginning of November went to Wimbledon. I advised him to apply his leisure on various Scotch matters which seemed to require legislation. The principal of these were the Poor Law, Education, the Law of Evidence, and the Police. He was not disposed, however, to meddle with more than he had already on hand—especially “as the misfortune is, that government will not take the trouble to understand any thing merely Scotch, and is therefore never cordial nor resolute.”—(1st November, 1831.) Every one of

these matters has been operated upon by Parliament since.

“I am delighted with this place, (Wimbledon.) It is much colder than London, but dry and bright. Fine old trees, skirting a bright green common, in tufts and masses ; some shining ponds glistening in the turf ; a boundless horizon, with the Richmond woods on one side, and the Surrey hills on the other ; a gay but quiet village, sinking into the wood, and a garland of large shady villas sweeping in a full crescent round a broad bay of the common ; a nice, dry, airy house ; with a garden of smooth turf and broad gravel walks, backed up with evergreens, and thick wood. I have brought a good store of books, and read with voracious delight. I am even voracious at dinner ; and have my carriage and horses. In short, if it were not for that old pain, which is the devil and Satan, I should be very happy, and by God’s grace I hope to get the mastery over it in due time. Mrs. J. and Charley (his daughter) are in ecstasy at having at last escaped from that stifling noisy London ; and run about like your boys at Bonaly in the first days of vacation.”—(To me, 4th November, 1831.)

Parliament met again early in December. On the 17th of that month, ministers had a great majority on the second reading of the bill. “The debate on the whole, was not interesting. — made a most impudent, unfair, and petulant speech, but with passages of great cleverness. Macaulay made, I think, the best he has yet delivered ; the most condensed at least, and with the greatest weight of matter. It contained the only argument, indeed, to which any of the speakers who followed him applied themselves. There was a very running fire of small calibres, all the early part of yesterday. But there were, in the end, three remarkable speeches,—first, a mild, clear, authoritative vindication of *the measure*, upon broad grounds, and in answer to general imputations, by Lord John Russell ; delivered with a louder voice, and more

decided manner than usual with him. Next a magnificent, spirited, and most eloquent speech by Stanley—chiefly in castigation of —, whom he trampled in the dirt, but containing also a beautiful and spirited vindication of the whole principle and object of Reform. This was by far the best speech I have heard from Stanley, and I fancy much the best he has ever made. It was the best, too, I must own, in the debate; for, though Macaulay's was more logical and full of thought, this was more easy, spirited, and graceful. The last was Peel's, which, though remarkable, was not good," &c.—(To me.)

In a few days after this he thought himself almost sufficiently rewarded for having taken office, by the power which it gave him of obtaining one of the principal clerkships in the Court of Session for George Joseph Bell. He would have made him a judge if there had been a vacancy; and certainly no man had ever a stronger claim, so far as such claims depend on eminent fitness, than Mr. Bell had for a seat on that bench, which his great legal work had been instructing and directing for above thirty years.

Jeffrey wrote something in jest to Lord Holland, who was going to visit the king at Brighton, about the Scotch and the year 1745. In a few days he saw his lordship after his return. "He says he won five-and-sixpence from the king at cribbage, and was sent to bed at eleven o'clock. Can you conceive any thing more innocent or primitive? a king playing eagerly for sixpences! He tells me he also read to his majesty the letter I wrote him about a new *rebellion* in Scotland, if the bills were not passed, and with very good effect. The king condescended to observe that there was a *Scotticism* in the letter, viz: the use of the word *misgive* for *fail* or *miscarry*, which I do not think a Scotticism; but who will dispute with a king? For all this we are not easy."—(To me, 2d Feb., 1832.)

He met Talleyrand at Holland House, and gives this account of him: "He is more natural, plain, and reason-

able, than I had expected ; a great deal of the repose of high breeding and old age, with a mild and benevolent manner, and great calmness of speech, rather than the sharp, caustic, cutting speech of a practised utterer of *bons mots*. He spoke a great deal of old times and old persons, the court of Louis XVI. when Dauphin, his coronation, Voltaire, Malsherbe, Turgot ; with traditional anecdotes of Massillon and Bossuet, and many women of these days, whose names I have forgotten, and a good deal of diplomatic anecdote, altogether very pleasing and easy. He did not eat much, nor talk much about eating, except only that he inquired very earnestly into the nature of *cocky-leekie*,* and wished much to know whether *prunes* were essential. He settled at last that they should be boiled in the soup, but not brought up in it. He drank little but iced water."—(To me, 5th Feb., 1832.)

The following is part of his account of the second reading of the Reform Bill in the Lords, (14th April, 1832 :)
" As I did not get to bed till near eight this morning, (and was out again at eleven,) after fourteen hours starving in the Lords, you cannot expect a long or a lively letter from me. You will see we had a majority of nine, being one more than anybody can account for. The debate was not very brilliant, but got, in its latter stage, excessively interesting. The Chancellor, more tranquil and less offensive than usual, but not at all languid, and in very good voice throughout, chiefly correcting false representations, dispelling vain terrors, and arranging and soothing. Lyndhurst's by far the cleverest and most dangerous speech against us in the debate, and very well spoken. Lord Grey's reply, on the whole, admirable ; in tone and spirit perfect, and, considering his age and the time, really astonishing. He spoke near an hour and a half, after five o'clock, from the kindling dawn into full sunlight, and I think with great

* A Scotch soup.

effect. The aspect of the House was very striking through the whole night, very full, and, on the whole, still and solemn, (but for the row with Durham and Phillpots, which ended in the merited exposure of the latter.) The whole throne and the space around it clustered over with 100 members of our House, and the space below the bar (which, since the galleries which are constructed over the grand entrance, is also left entirely for us) nearly filled with 200 more, ranged in a standing row of three deep along the bar, another sitting on the ground against the wall, and the space between covered with moving and sitting figures in all directions, with twenty or thirty clambering on the railings, and perched up by the doorways. Between four and five, when the daylight began to shed its blue beams across the red candlelight, the scene was very picturesque, from the singular grouping of forty or fifty of us sprawling on the floor, awake and asleep, in all imaginable attitudes, and with all sorts of expressions and wrappings. ‘*Young Cad-boll*,’ who chose to try how he could sleep *standing*, jammed in a corner, fell flat down over two prostrate Irishmen on the floor, with a noise that made us all start, but no mischief was done. The candles had been renewed before dawn, and blazed on after the sun came fairly in at the high windows, and produced a strange, but rather grand effect on the red draperies and furniture, and dusky tapestry on the walls. Heaven knows what will become of it.” (To me, 14th April, 1832.)

The bill was thrown out by the Peers in May. This led to a resignation of ministry, which was thus announced to me, (9th May, 1832:) “Well, my dear C., we are all out! and so ends the first act of our comedy. God grant that it may not fall too soon into the tragic vein. The fact is not generally *known* yet, (I am now writing to you about noon;) but it is surmised, and before six o’clock it will be announced in Parliament. I went to Althorpe at ten o’clock to ask, and had a characteristic scene with that most honest,

frank, true, and stout-hearted of all God's creatures. He had not come down-stairs, and I was led up to his dressing-room, where I found him sitting on a stool, in a dark duffle dressing-gown, with his arms (very rough and hairy) bare above the elbows, and his beard half shaved, and half staring through the lather, with a desperate razor in one hand, and a great soap-brush in the other. He gave me the loose finger of the brush hand, and with the usual twinkle of his bright eye and radiant smile, he said: 'You need not be anxious about your Scotch bill for to-night, for I have the pleasure to tell you, *we are no longer his Majesty's Ministers.*' It is idle to speculate on the coming events; though events will come, and *offences* too, and wo most probably to those through whom they come. Nor is it much wiser to look backward now, except for the consolation of not having, at all events, been shabby or mercenary, and the other comfort (for it is really one now) of never having been sanguine. In the mean time, do what you can to *keep peace*, and with your last official breath exhort and conjure lovers of liberty to be lovers of order and tolerance. I tremble for Scotland, and think there is greater hazard there than in any other quarter."

In this horror of popular commotion, and anticipating the formation of a government resolved to dissolve, and not to reform, he draws the following picture: "It will only require twelve or fifteen desperate men to be got together in a room—a Chancellor and Home Secretary to be created—a commission made for proroguing Parliament at two o'clock, and a proclamation for dissolving it for the Evening Gazette—an insulting answer proposed to the address of the Commons—and the country is on fire before Sunday morning; ay—inextinguishable fire, though blood should be poured out on it like water! Then would follow the dispersion of unions and meetings, and petitions by soldiery; and vindictive burnings; and massacres of anti-reformers, in all the manufacturing districts; and summary

arrests of men accused of sedition and treason ; and shoals of persecutions for libels, followed by triumphant acquittals, and elections carried through amidst sanguinary tumults, and finally, a House of Commons returned to put down that brutal administration, but *too late* to stay the torrent it had created. There is a scene for you !!"—(To me, 17th May, 1832.)

To those who think the loss of political power the greatest of all misfortunes, the following account of one man's resignation under that calamity may be useful: "Lord Althorpe has gone through all this with his characteristic cheerfulness and courage. The day after the resignation he spent in a great sale garden, choosing and buying flowers, and came home with five great packages in his carriage, devoting the evening to studying where they should be planted in his garden at Althorpe, and writing directions and drawing plans for their arrangement. And when they came to summon him to a council on the duke's giving in, he was found in a closet with a groom, busy oiling the locks of his fowling-pieces, and lamenting the decay into which they had fallen during his ministry."—(To me, 21st May, 1832.)

Ministry being replaced within a week, he proceeded with the Scotch bill ; but "my reason for speaking little is, that I have no voice to insure a hearing ; and, to-day, I am sorry to say that it is worse than usual, which, as I must go on with my Reform Bill, is very provoking."—(21st May, 1832.) However, it seems that no voice was quite sufficient, because "Lord Althorpe desired me to say nothing at moving (the second reading), and, as there was to be no division, he said it was not regular to reply."—(22d May, 1832.)

A personal, and political, and well-qualified friend of his own being a candidate for a chair in one of our colleges, he says, (4th June, 1832:) "Unless —— sends good medical credentials, he certainly will *not* be appointed. I

have had some talk with Lord Melbourne about it, who says, that to job a teaching chair in a great medical school would be *disgraceful*, and that he will not give it to any man because he is a Whig, unless he be the best, or among the best, in all respects ; and who shall say otherwise ?"

The Scotch bill passed the Commons about midnight on the 27th of June, 1832.

This did not end his anxieties, but it greatly relieved them. It left little beyond the general principles of the measure to be discussed, and this was virtually settled by the English case ; though there were some persons, and even in high places, who wished to protract the struggle, on the curious ground, that though the representation of England had been reformed, that of Scotland had better continue as it was. But this could not disturb him, and the intrigues, and discussions, and wranglings that had agitated the preceding eight months, were virtually at an end. Being the official manager of the measure, he, like every one else in that position, had to resist the most opposite proposals, both from friendly and from hostile quarters, and was blamed accordingly. For example, he was loudly condemned for leaving each of the two adjoining shires of Peebles and Selkirk, one with about 12,000, and the other with about 8000 inhabitants, with a member, and for giving only one member to Orkney and Shetland jointly, these two islands being separated by one hundred miles of tempestuous sea, and the people in each amounting to above thirty thousand. And still more wildly was he attacked for having introduced a members' qualification clause, which was a novelty in this country, into the Scotch bill. But the truth is, and this was explained, uselessly at the time, that he opposed all these provisions. The qualification clause, indeed, which at first applied to towns as well as shires, he resisted almost to the extent of resigning ; and when this part of the statute was altered, Lord Althorpe stated in the House, that "he took blame to himself

for not having had more regard to the advice and mediation of the Lord-Advocate." Many similar examples might be given.* They are common to all men in his position.

His reflections on getting the measure through the Commons were these: "It is odd how strangely I felt as I walked home alone last night after all was over. Instead of being elated or relieved, I could not help feeling a deep depression and sadness, and I rather think I dropped a tear or two, as I paused to interrogate my own feelings in St. James's Square. I cannot very well explain this, but a sense of the littleness and vanity even of those great contentions was uppermost in my mind. I have ever since had a most intense longing to get home, and when so many of my fellow members now think themselves free, and are preparing to set off to-morrow or next day, it seems peculiarly hard on me to be chained for two or three weeks longer. I trust, however, it will be no more, and then I shall have some summer to enjoy yet. I hunger and thirst for another view of Loch Lomond and my Highlands, and hope to meet you at Glenfinnart† before grouse has become common. Do for me what you can with the citizens, and let me know what is wanted on my part."—(To me, 28th June, 1832.)

The bill passed the Lords on the 12th of July. On coming from a long night's work in the Commons that day, this scene was presented: "It was a most lovely, warm, rosy, dead calm morning, when we broke up; and the perfect reflection of all the towers and trees on the water, with the fresh, crisp solidity of the unmoving foliage in that glorious metallic light, made up a magnificent scene."—(To me, 13th July, 1832.)

At the eleventh hour, and when on the very eve of the

* A Scandinavian put forth a fierce pamphlet which seemed to be directed chiefly against the atrocity of his native Shetland being called Zetland in the bill.

† Where Lord Fullerton was living.

royal assent, his patience was severely tried by the fancied discoveries of eager and captious friends, who pretended to groan over the bill, and to predict its entire failure, because their new and confident nonsense had not been foreseen and provided against. “Certainly there is an alacrity in *fault-finding* among some of our friends, which, but for the actual experience of it, I should not have thought possible; and then so fierce, and conceited, and infallible. I do not know two such provoking, wrong-headed, unmanageable fools, as the said —, and —; and wish to God they would kill each other, and deliver us from the intolerable plague of their counsels.”

The lamented illness of Sir Walter Scott, who was not in a condition either to act as Sheriff of Selkirkshire, under the Reform Bill, or to appoint a substitute, or to resign, made it necessary to pass a statute enabling the crown to appoint an interim sheriff to act during his incapacity. This was all arranged with Sir Walter’s friends; and no one who knew Jeffrey could doubt the affectionate tenderness with which he would perform the sad duty of moving the bill. Nevertheless, it has been said that he was actuated by a desire to have an office to give away! Mr. Lockhart has explained the true facts, as the best answer to “a statement *highly unjust and injurious*;” and adds, that when “Mr. Jeffrey introduced his bill in the House of Commons, he used language so graceful and touching, that both Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Croker went across the House to thank him cordially for it.”—(Life of Scott, chap. 83.)

Parliament having adjourned with a view to dissolution, he proceeded homeward. “It is beautiful weather, only too hot. I hope to dine in the cool groves of Rochampton with the Mintos to-morrow, and then turn my face to the fresh air of the north. There is a spring and a bracing in the very thought of it.” “And so ends the chronicle of this session, ever memorable, and destined, I trust, to be of

blessed memory to all future generations, though it closes in tears, and amidst signs of times which are big with anxiety and alarm."—(To me, 10th August, 1832.) "A lovely day ; and I feel that I shall revive when I meet the bracing air of the north. Yet there is some pang in leaving one's house of a year ; and the loneliness of London and its outskirts has rather a melancholy air this morning."—(12th August, 1832.)

He came here in the middle of August, 1832, and remained till Parliament met again in February, 1833. His chief object now was, to be returned to the first Reformed Parliament by his native city. But even this ambition did not fire him, as it would have done some excited candidates. "—— annoys me by stating that I should not *lose a moment in coming down* to canvass. Now, first, I cannot possibly stir till our bill is through the Lords, as well as the Commons ; there being no one man on our side who knows any thing of the history or detail of the measure, or could give any explanation as to many points liable enough to be misunderstood, and even, I fear, rashly abandoned. In the next place, I have the greatest horror, if I were even free, to move at such a call, at the idea of running about begging the votes of 10,000 or 12,000 people, and counterfeiting great pride and eagerness, when all the time I would give a good round sum to be honourably rid of the House. And lastly, as I stand solely from public necessity, and to oblige or obey my political friends on the spot, I do think it reasonable that they should arrange, and take the charge of the canvass for me, being a thing for which I have no manner of genius or stomach at the present moment. I hope this will not appear unreasonable or selfish. It may show more indifference on the subject than would be wise to confess to electors, but not a bit more, nor, indeed, half so much as I feel. I do not find it is expected that I should put forth either a profession of faith or an humble supplication for support. Nor, on the other hand,

do I hear of any requisition or invitation proposed to be addressed to me. But upon all that, I put myself in your hands, and give you power either to address the electors in my name, or to intimate, in answer to any requisition, that I am willing to be indebted to their support," &c. &c. His associate in this object was the Hon. James Abercrombie, who for many years had so identified himself with the cause of his countrymen, that long before popular election was introduced, he used to be described as the representative, not of the city, but of the citizens. No selection by the constituents could be more natural. Ever since the old bondage had begun to relax, he had warmly and steadily supported the people in all their reasonable efforts; and they who know those matters best will be the readiest to attest that, without his sagacity and firmness, his influence and parliamentary experience, and his earnest desire to improve the condition of his countrymen, many of their strongest claims would have been without a practical adviser in London.

He and Jeffrey received a requisition to let themselves be put in nomination, signed by about 1200 electors. They consented, and went through the usual process of addressing meetings of the constituents, and of seeing and conferring with the district leaders. These things have become common since; but this was the first time that the people had ever exercised the elective franchise; and the novelty of the proceedings gave them an interest that can never be felt again. People stared at the very sight of the hustings; all from curiosity, many with delight, some with unaffected horror. One party saw, in these few rare planks, the fulfilment of a vision long cherished; another the end of a system which they had hoped to perpetuate. The nomination was on the 17th of December, 1832, the declaration of the poll upon the 19th. Their opponent on the Tory side was a most excellent gentleman, Mr. Forbes Blair, a banker. The result was, that 4058 voted for Jeffrey, 3865 for Mr.

Abercrombie, 1519 for Mr. Blair. It is due to the electors to state, that the first two were returned free of expense.

It was in connection with these proceedings that he first got well acquainted with the late Sir Thomas Lauder, who had left his most beautiful place on the river Findhorn, and settled in Edinburgh in 1831. His popular qualities made him a valuable ally in an election, but it was for higher excellences that Jeffrey adhered to him. He was one of the most accomplished of country gentlemen. Few men, not bred to any regular profession, (for his soldiership was very short,) could have distinguished themselves in such a variety of ways as he could, if he had chosen. He did enough to attest his capacity both for science and for art; and some of his works of fiction would have made more permanent impressions than they have done, had they not appeared in the immediate blaze of those of Scott. His account of the “Great Floods of August, 1829, in the province of Moray and adjoining districts,” is perhaps the best description that there is of any British inundation. Yet even these powers were apt to be lost sight of by his friends, amidst their enjoyment of his worth and amiable gayety.

Jeffrey remained here from August, 1832, till February, 1833, when he was obliged to return to Parliament; and at no period of his life was he happier, or with better reason. Restored health, the society of his natural friends, some truce to official annoyance, a slight resumption of his professional occupations, and the high position he had reached, supplied him with all the sources of rational pleasure.

On his way back to London, he says, “I left you all more sadly this time than the time before; partly, I believe, because I had settled more down to my old habits, and partly because I could not but feel how fast the tide of life is ebbing away from us, and how little may remain to

be enjoyed after another return, not for Edinburgh, but to it. No matter, we must all do as we must, and all is said. We are drifting down to rapids at least, if not to an absolute cataract, and we must keep our heads steady."—(To me, from Stevenage, 3d February, 1833.)

The only friend, besides his wife, daughter, and servants, that he took with him, was one he often mentions, "*Poor Polly*," a gray and very wise parrot. He was attached to all that sort of domestic companions, and submitted to much banter on account of the soft travelling-basket for the little dog Witch, and the large cage for this bird. The hearth-rug and the sofa were seldom free of his dumb pets. He was very unwell for above two months after he arrived, in the trachea, and, generally, nearly voiceless.

The reform of the burghs was now the great object, but it was far from superseding other matters; for there were endless discussions, and the usual amount of suggestive and of obstructive positiveness on all sides, about the Anatomy Bill, Church Patronage, Sheriffs, Law Reform, Edinburgh Annuity Tax, and many other matters. This was natural. The Reform Act had broken down the dam that used to keep back the stream of legislative improvement. The obstacle was no sooner removed, than grievances, all said, however old, to require instant correction, started up in every corner, and covered the land with exhalations of reformers. Some of these were reasonable; not the less so that they saw difficulties, and were patient. Many, in their enthusiasm and conceit, would hear of no doubt; and had to learn, by mortifying experience, that most cases have at the least two sides, and that delay is often the ballast of sound legislation. In the first flush of their liberation, every one desirous of distinguishing himself by his little bit of reform rushed with his project to the Lord-Advocate; and if he found that government or parliament were not to concede in a moment all that

he wanted, abused his lordship as a changed man. Several of these schemes, clear as their promoters thought them, have not, after the lapse of twenty additional years, been settled yet. Meanwhile, though their promoters troubled the official receptacle, they could not subdue his sense of duty or his good nature. He heard everybody, and never spared himself, but could not help being often amazed at the absurdity he had to deal with.

In the midst of this bustle he did not forget the Speculative Society; which, and all other such institutions within the College, were in great danger from a scandalous desire on the part of the town-council or its leaders, to take all their apartments from them, for the accommodation of one or two professors. It was fortunate that, at this very moment, government was making a grant of about £10,000 to the magistrates for the College. The state of things being explained to Jeffrey, he went to Lord Brougham, and says, (10th February, 1833:) "I have seen the Chancellor, and he engages that the grant to the college certainly shall not issue, but on condition of the *Studio* *Juventus* having accommodation for their societies," which they accordingly were allowed to retain.

He was soon in all the whirl of the place he had gone to. "I dined yesterday at Ham with —, and Lords —, —, —, and other Tories. To-day I go to the Chief Justice's, whom I have scarcely seen; and to-morrow I have hard duty, first to the House of Lords at ten, then to the drawing-room at two, then to a *dressed* dinner at Lord Melbourne's at seven, and finally to Lady Lansdowne's at night. The drawing-room is the most irksome. But I do well to write to you to-day, though I cannot now write any more. Monday, 25th.—Well! I have got through the heaviest half of my day's task, having argued till two, and paraded in the drawing-room till near five; a very brilliant and imposing spectacle, and more beautiful women than I ever saw together before, and

more beautifully dressed. But the star of all stars in my eyes is ——, who wants nothing but wings and immortality to be an angel. The getting away, as usual, was tiresome; but, on the whole, I thought the pastime so good that I think I shall go to another. We had a delightful *quiet* dinner with the Chief Justice yesterday, no one but Sharpe and Empson. He is full of heart and spirits, and we stayed talking till eleven.”—(To me, 24th February, 1833.)

The Irish Coercion Bill gave him the best view he had yet obtained of the nature of a certain class of the Irish members—“without the least sense of shame or honour; bold, desperate, and loquacious.”—(3d February, 1833.) He was always inclined to hope better of O’Connell, and had a great admiration of his eloquence. “He is a great artist. In my opinion indisputably the greatest orator in the House; nervous, passionate, without art or ornament; concise, intrepid, terrible; far more in the style of old Demosthenic directness and vehemence, than any thing I have heard in this modern world; yet often coarse, and sometimes tiresome, as Demosthenes was too, though venturing far less, and going over far less ground.”—(To me, 4th March, 1833.)

The Burgh Bill was moved for on the 12th March, 1833, “without any discussion, or next to none; and I shall read it a first time, I hope, to-morrow, and a second time on Friday, in the same quiet and comfortable way. The secret of this is, that we finally arranged to send it, after the second reading, to a special committee up-stairs, consisting of all the twenty-three burgh members for Scotland, who may there discuss and suggest at their leisure, and, having so exhausted themselves, will not be much disposed, or readily allowed, to bother about it in the House.”—(To me, 12th March, 1833.)

Was it owing to their anticipating this, that they took their own way in the committee? He seems to have been

absolutely worried, not so much by the direct opposition of those who were against the measure, as by the restless conceit and intolerance of its friends. Every man in every town thought that this was a matter on which he was entitled to speak, and confidently ; and as there was little analogy to be affected by it in England, it was not adequately taken charge of by government. It was therefore far more distressing to the Lord-Advocate, in whose unassisted hands they left it, than the parliamentary reform had been. “ Our committee—I mean the Scotch burgh committee—goes on as ill as possible, and it is difficult to say who behaves worst.” “ They chatter, and wrangle, and contradict, and grow angry, and read letters and extracts from blockheads of town-clerks, and little fierce agitators ; and forgetting that they are members of a great legislature, and (some of them) attached to a fair ministry, go on speculating, and suggesting, and debating, more loosely, crudely, and interminably, than a parcel of college youths in the first novitiate of disceptation.”—(To me, 28th March, 1833.)

His speculation upon Parliament itself, on its rising for Easter, is in the same spirit. “ The first act of the new parliamentary drama will probably end, for a short interval, on Wednesday ; and I am afraid is not to be looked back to with much satisfaction. The friction in the working of the machine, and the consequent obstruction of its movements, has been much greater than was ever known ; and though this may grow less when it has been longer in use, as is the case with all new machines, I am afraid part of it is owing to the increased number of independent movements, and part, perhaps, to the want of the *old oiling* which can no longer be afforded. It is pretty plain, too, that though on the great *political* questions there is a great majority against all extreme opinions, there is a very formidable and unruly mass of crude and perilous doctrines upon all the other great interests of society ; and, above

all, such a determination on the part of the respective *doctrinaires* to have what they call a full and thorough discussion of merits, and to take no check from indications of dislike and disgust on the part of the House, that I foresee we shall have quite as long and nauseating debates on currency, church reform, East Indies, slavery, property-tax, poor-laws, and other economical topics, as we have had upon Ireland ; and, as life and days do not admit of equivalent prolongations, that we shall make no substantial progress in most of them, or in any thing else, although we should sit till January ; while the impatient and factious *movement* is hooting, and hissing, and abusing us for not regenerating all things before the middle of June ! This is truly our position and practical prospect, which you will admit is sufficiently cheering. I often think seriously of cutting and running, (especially if I have a sick fit,) and the only thing that prevents me is the difficulty of deciding what to run to, and a sort of epicurean fatalism in my creed, which has long made me believe that as we must *do something*, and suffer something in this uncontrollable world, it is better to leave Providence to determine what it shall be, than to vex one's-self, and increase one's responsibility, by trying to alter it."—(To me, 28th March, 1833.)

There are few who have ever been engaged in getting even friends to co-operate in measures of practical wisdom, who will not sympathize with him when he says : " It is mortifying and marvellous to find *how difficult it is to do good*, even when one is good-natured, and has neither sanguine motives nor sinister views."—(23d March, 1833.)

The changes in the midst of which he lived, and the general action of new principles, exposed him somewhat more than usual, perhaps, to the torment of details, for which, as he could not control them, he should not have been held responsible, and which distract any Lord-Advocate more than the higher duties of his place. " The great

oppression to which my office is subjected is not so much in this business of legislature, as to which the Advocate should always be for something, as the endless *political references* and reports upon applications for places and offices, from a common exciseman up to a supreme judge, through all the variations of ministers, schoolmasters, professors, justices of the peace, lord-lieutenants, staff surgeons, colonies, consuls, king's confectioners, &c. &c. The time this occupies, and its infinite irksomeness, is the great drawback to the situation ; and it must sooner or later be relieved of it.”—(To me, 16th April, 1833.)

These vexations were not diminished by feeble health, made worse by the hay fever. “The weather is very hot and beautiful now. I wish I were lolling on one of my high shady seats at Craigcrook, listening to the soothing wind among the branches. And it is shocking to think how much all that scene is disenchanted by its vicinity to my constituents. The fleshly presence of —, —, —,* by whom I am baited daily, helps, I doubt not, to enliven that impression.”—(To me, 16th July, 1833.) He refreshed himself by substitute scenes. “I do take your advice, and fly at the end of the week to my wood nymphs. We came here last night, eight hours before the Lords had read our bill for the second time, and I have been all day wandering among the ancient Druidical oaks and gigantic limes at Moor Park, which is about four miles off, and full of grandeur and beauty. What a country this old England is ! In a circle of twenty miles from this spot, (leaving out London and suburbs,) there is more old timber and superb residences than in all Scotland, and with so little ostentation.”—(To me, from Watford, 20th July, 1833.)

“It is sweet weather, and I pine hourly for shades, and leisure, and the Doric sounds of my mother tongue ! I

* All dead ; and most intolerable, wherever any opinion of theirs was not instantly submitted to.

read through the Gentle Shepherd the other day at Malthus's, and cried plentifully over the recollections it brought back to my excited heart. I think I am decidedly better, having sat in the House till after one this morning, and walked home pleasantly at the breaking up. But I shall keep to my hermit diet, and shall make a poor figure at your symposia, if I do not mend my manners before I come among you. Both Houses are dropping their members like trees their leaves in autumn. Town is visibly thinning, and begins to have a deserted appearance. It is a mercy the prorogation is still thought inevitable once a year."—(To me, 6th August, 1833.)

The prorogation was now at hand. "The waters grow shallower, with rather more rapidity." I expressed my sorrow for this, as it would prevent my receiving more of his letters, which, in joke, I threatened to publish, to which he says: "You are very kind about my letters, but if I thought there was the least chance of their ever seeing the light, I fear all feelings of kindness would be cancelled. I sometimes laugh myself to think what a picture of contradictions and rash prophecy they must exhibit. The only thing I have not to blush for is, that I do not think they indicate any base regard to self-interest, or any personal malice or vindictiveness. I think we must make a bonfire of them the first time we dine quietly together at a winter fireside, if that is ever to be again."—(To me, 12th August, 1833.)

"Cobbett, and ——, and our worthy —— grow more radical and outrageous as the session draws to a close; in order, I suppose, that they may go to their constituents with the sweet savour of these offences fresh upon them, to counteract any odour of reason or moderation that they may have contracted in other parts of their course." "In other respects we move rather steadily to our destined goal; and it seems universally thought that the curtain will be dropped and the audience dismissed about the 27th. Un-

less I have bad luck, therefore, I do not see why I should not get away on the 24th or 25th. I pant beyond expression for two days of absolute and unbroken leisure. If it were not for my love of beautiful nature and poetry, my heart would have died within me long ago. I never felt before what immeasurable benefactors these same poets are to their kind, and how large a measure, both of actual happiness and prevention of misery, they have imparted to the race. I would willingly give up half my fortune, and some little of the fragments of health and bodily enjoyment that remain to me, rather than that Shakspeare should not have lived before me. And so God bless you."

(To me, 16th August, 1833.)

The Burgh Bill, in spite of all its perils, (some of them not from its open enemies,) was at last safe; and looking back upon it and the reform Parliament, he was well entitled to enjoy these reflections: "If things go right, I think I shall move on Sunday or Monday. It makes me start when I think of this as a reality, which I have been so long accustomed to cherish as a dream by night and a vision only in the day. It is something to have had even an official and accidental connection with two such measures as Parliamentary and Burgh Reform; and if I have not made, or had occasion to make, any great splash about them, I must say I think I have been diligent and prudent in my management, as I am sure I have been candid and open in every stage of their discussion. I shall never have any task of equal importance to perform, and should be well enough pleased if this should be the last that is required of me. Though I like London, and do not dislike Parliament by any means, I rather think I have had almost enough of them; and that it would be better for me to retreat to a calmer and less elevated region, and glide through the remaining course of my life in tranquillity. I shall not run at once into the embraces of my constituents."—(To me, 20th August, 1833.)

He left London on the 24th of August, and, after some English visits, reached Craigcrook about the middle of September. Within twenty-four hours the constituents found him out ; but he “found them not only thoroughly amicable, but greatly more reasonable than I expected.” The autumn and winter were passed as usual ; and early in February he returned to London, “with something of a heavy heart and a shrinking spirit, and would rather have flown away on a dove’s wings, and been at rest. But I suppose this will come sometime ; and meanwhile I take it for granted that when I am once in the battle, I shall imbibe the spirit of the scene, and follow the multitude to do evil.”—(To Mrs. Craig, 9th February, 1834.) He certainly did. These pensive aspirations after rest, though they occurred in his visionary moments, seldom obstructed his practical pursuits. During the three months of this residence in London, he was often in the House of Lords professionally, and a great deal in society, but was chiefly occupied in the House and its committees on various local matters, which need not be explained here, and had no result. Of these the most important related to the old, and vexed, and now useless subject of patronage in the Church of Scotland, on which a committee had been obtained by his friend Sir George Sinclair. While these things were going on, a vacancy occurred on the bench of the Court of Session, and he became a judge.

“I am no longer in Parliament after two hours, and no longer Lord-Advocate. A new writ will be moved for Edinburgh to-night, on my acceptance of office. I have just taken my last peep into that turbulent, potent, heart-stirring House of Commons, and finished an hour ago the last argument I shall ever deliver from any bar. There is something sad in these finalities, and my present feeling is of that character ; but through this dimness I see a bright vision of leisure, reason, and happiness. God bless you,

ever yours. Remember I am, hereafter, only F. J., and no franks."—(To me, 15th May, 1833.)

"I am so much flattered and condoled with here, that I linger too fondly. But all that scene will soon pass away now, and I *shall* by and by forget it, as much as I ought to forget it."—(To me, 23d May, 1834.)

"And so here at last ends our metropolitan correspondence! and I really turn my back *finally* on London, and betake myself to the venerable functions of a judge. I wish I had more of the inward vocation to the holy office. But I suppose it will come, and I am quite sure I shall be delighted to find myself once more in the midst of my oldest and truest friends. In the mean time I cannot but wish that the parting were fairly over, nor help acknowledging that it has been, and is attended with pain. I have naturalized here perfectly, and have been more kindly received than is good for my modesty to remember, though I am sure it is not bad for my heart. I have stuck to my social career, too, as dutifully as I did to my parliamentary. On Saturday I dined with Rogers; on Sunday at Richmond; yesterday at Lady Park's; and to-day at Holland House, with Lady Cowper, Duncannon, Luttrell, and Sir A. Paget. Then I saw my bright — in the morning, and my dear — at night, and had such tender partings! And I had a long walk in the park yesterday with the Chancellor and Duncannon, both as merry as school-boys; and sat an hour with Joanna Baillie, and my poor, sick-spirited Mrs. Calcot. Well, there must be an end of all things, and the end of one thing is the beginning of another, and death of life, and so forth."—(To me, 27th May, 1834.)

To George Bell, the old and steady associate of his obscure and penniless days, he intimated his change of life thus: "You know I am out of Parliament, and about to be on the bench. I have had a pang on parting with so much interest, excitement, and kindness as have been shed over my life here. But I do not doubt that I have done

right on the whole, for myself at all events, and I hope not wrong for any other. I am not composed enough to write deliberately, but the greatest soother I can find, in my agitation, is the thought of coming back to end my days where they began, and among the few remaining friends from whom I have never been for a moment divided in affection.”
(To George Bell, Esq., London, 16th May, 1834.)

Before he came away he had the honour of receiving a farewell banquet from the Scotch members. About thirty-three attended, some of whom were his political opponents. One of the party, who, I believe, had a longer experience of parliamentary speaking than any one there, wrote to a friend here next day: “Jeffrey’s speech at his dinner yesterday was exquisitely beautiful. It was perfect. I cannot say how much I was pleased and charmed with it.” His own account of the party was this: “I had a jolly dinner with the Scotch members on Tuesday—about thirty-two present—two Tories, Cumming Bruce, and Pitfour. Apologies in very kind terms from Sir William Rae, and about a dozen of our friends. They stayed till one o’clock, and were not all sober.”—(To me, 22d May, 1834.)

This testimony proceeded partly from personal liking; but it was also meant as an acknowledgment of his official conduct. And certainly the duties of the very trying situation he had just left had never been performed, in such circumstances, with greater industry, or fairness, or judgment; nor was Scotland ever under the protection of a purer or more enlightened public accuser. Some people used to doubt if he was a good manager of men. But these were generally persons who were urging him to do something he disapproved of. And, at any rate, some deficiency in the art of controlling discordant parties would be but a small deduction from the merit of any counsel raised suddenly into his position, even in peaceful times. But he was called into public action at a period teeming with projects, and he, nearly deserted by government, was

left to the mercies of every county, city, parish, public body, or person, who had an interest or a fancy to urge. Thus encouraged, few opponents were candid ; some friends obstinate ; no theorist timid ; no applicant slack ; no block-head modest. Having done all that patience, reason, and kindness could do to bring this chaos into order, the failure, when it occurred, was their fault—not his. Let him be tried by any one who has held his office. Had it not been for the steady aid of a few honest and sensible men, neither he, nor any one else, could have stood in the place he then occupied. Of these friends, to him and to Scotland, he always mentioned the Earl of Minto and Mr. Kennedy, as entitled to his gratitude, and to that of their country. Throughout the whole composition of the Reform Bill, down to the minutest criticisms, he had to receive the remarks of a committee of sheriffs, whose duty it was, they being the officers who were principally to carry it into effect, to anticipate and to fancy objections. But though there perhaps was not one of them who would not have rejoiced in the failure of the measure, their suggestions were made in a fair spirit, and were therefore always gratefully listened to, and to a great extent acted upon. Mr. Cay, the intelligent Sheriff of Linlithgowshire, who was their convener, informs me that throughout all their many and often rather teasing objections and proposals, pervading at least nine editions of the bill, they found the Lord-Advocate not merely open to explanation, but patient and reasonable. No fact could be more honourable to the candour of both parties.

It was also said that he had *failed* in Parliament ; and wonder was expressed how this could befall a person of his ability and character. But, unless it was as a speaker, he did not fail. He was a regular attender, a good voter, a wise adviser, and a popular gentleman. Few men's opinions were more valued. Can there not be a good silent member ? If all those are to be held to have failed who do

not speak well and often, there are at least five hundred members who have failed in every Parliament. As to speaking, though he practised it much more and much better than is commonly supposed, still, *for him*, he must be deemed not to have succeeded. But there is no difficulty in accounting for this. The true wonder would have arisen if it had been otherwise.

He was a lawyer ; who had entered the House at fifty-seven, with a great reputation, a weakened voice, and the certainty that his parliamentary career could not extend beyond a very few years, and might end at any moment. Nothing beyond these facts could have been required to explain his want of success, though it had been complete and irrecoverable. But, in addition to these obstacles, he was a member of the government ; and his public words, therefore, were not his own. There are some to whom this restraint is a comfort. It justifies their silence, and directs them what to say. But to Jeffrey's speculative head, and nimble tongue, it operated as water does upon fire.

Yet, beyond all question, he was an eloquent man. And, though his power was not displayed in the great national theatre, it was upon his eloquence that much of his usefulness and reputation depended. I have spoken of it partly already ; and as it is scarcely worth while describing any thing so evanescent and so common as good speaking in this country, on its own account, I only add a few words in order to identify the individual style.

His voice was distinct and silvery ; so clear and precise, that, when in good order, it was heard above a world of discordant sounds. The utterance was excessively rapid ;*

* I believe the story is quite true, that a worthy man from Glasgow, on whom he poured out a long torrent of vituperation in an action for libel, after listening complacently till he was done, said : "Well ! he has spoken the whole English language thrice over in two hours." He had been so much warned against this habit, in reference to Parliament, that sometimes he actually spoke too slowly there.

but without sputtering, slurring, or confusion ; and regulated into deliberate emphasis, whenever this was proper. The velocity of the current was not more remarkable than its purity and richness. His command of language was unlimited. He used to say, that if he had to subdue the world by words, he would take his armour from Jeremy Taylor. And in copiousness and brilliancy, no living man came nearer the old divine. The mind by which these fine weapons were wielded was fully qualified to use them. Ridicule, sarcasm, argument, statement, pathos, or moral elevation—he could excel in them all. The only defect was one which earlier parliamentary practice must have corrected, and which it is not easy to reconcile with the ethereal nature of his general style. It was, that his magical facility led him into too much refinement, and consequently into occasional tediousness. He did not always rise to address an audience under the weight of deep preparation, or under the awe inspired by a large survey of his subject, but trusted to the immediate workings of his own mind. This withdrew him from the audience to himself ; and, instead of maintaining that constant and instinctive sympathy with his hearers, which enables a plainer speaker to perceive his success or his failure at the moment in their eyes, he was apt to be looking inward, and to be enjoying the inventive process going on in his own breast. This was an enjoyment with which listeners could have no sympathy. The pleasure was his, the weariness theirs. And the exercise promoted the defect of too active refinement. So just, with reference to all his peculiarities, was Horner's saying, that if Jeffrey could only speak slow, and add a cubit to his stature, and be a little dull, nobody could oppose him.

When he was in a good state, and with any thing in the place, the occasion, or the subject, to repress his fertility, and to subdue him to a simpler style, his success was certain. His necessarily short addresses were almost always

perfect. His appeal to the jury in the case of Paterson, accused of poisoning his wife, when, not being able to dispute that the prisoner had, at one time, intended to murder her, he successfully turned the fact into a ground for urging that during the interval he must have for ever recoiled from the guilt he had escaped ; his defence for Mrs. Mackinnon, accused of stabbing a young man to death, in a brawl in her disorderly house, where he described the horrible nature of public death to a female with some generous feelings, and how sweet life was even to a prostitute and a supposed murderess ;* his noble reply in the General Assembly for the minister of Inchture, in which his picture of the situation of a deposed clergyman, contrasted with that of his brethren, who, after pronouncing the sentence, were all to return to their comfortable homes, saved that client from conviction ; his speech to the public meeting of the inhabitants of Edinburgh at the Pantheon ; his graceful and affectionate address on his first installation as Lord Rector at Glasgow ; his lofty and scornful reply to the jury for Sir James Craig, on the trial of that gentleman's prosecution of the printer of a party newspaper for libel,—these, and many others with which our Edinburgh ears still thrill, were matchless and unalloyed exhibitions—leaving impressions which no rival effort, by any competitor, could efface.

With a larger theatre than ours, and a more formidable training, his parliamentary success would have been sure and splendid. But he had no chance in the circumstances in which he first tried the House of Commons ; partly because that, like every other assembly, has its own local tastes, and tolerates no other. Of these, the most extinguishing to an unpractised hand is the necessity of personalities—with which even instruction, to save it from

* It was from sitting all day under an open window, at this trial, that he was first affected by that infirmity in his throat, which recurred so distressingly throughout all the rest of his life.

being tiresome, must apparently be savoured. There is no denying the value of a weapon which is essential for the moral discipline of any assembly, and, as individually directed, may supply the most logical conclusions. But it is one from which a new member of any delicacy shrinks, and which nothing but long familiarity with the proceedings and the individualities of the place can enable any one to use with confidence and effect.* Moreover, the frequent failures in Parliament of speakers who shine elsewhere, are not always owing, as the regular House of Commons man is apt to suppose, merely to the essential superiority of the great scene; but to Parliament acquiring a very peculiar criterion of excellence, and having power to enforce submission to this, to the exclusion of every other style. There is every presumption that the best tone will be formed, and the best standard be set up, and the fairest play be given, in such a collection of such men; but there is no doubt that the distaste of every thing that is strange to their own habits and models does occasionally, and especially when dealing with the audacity of a provincial reputation, impair their perception of merit, which, wherever the field was open, would not be universally postponed to that of their own idols.

Jeffrey's reception in all his previous visits to London, where he had formed many valuable friendships, had always been kind. But during the three official years which he had mostly passed there, he was still more extensively known and courted; and this by various classes, including not only the literary and political, but, to a certain extent, even the fashionable. This popularity, by which he was

* Horner accounts for his own silence, after being above two years in Parliament, partly by this necessity. "There have been some discouragements of a different nature; the petty war of political personalities is exceedingly irksome to me, (being personally not implicated,) and I have witnessed but little else since I sat in the House."—Memoirs, i. 445.

less elated than softened into gratitude, was the result of his character and of his conversation.

The last I have not skill to describe, except negatively. He was certainly a first-rate talker. But he was not an avowed sayer of good things; nor did he deal but very sparingly in anecdote, or in personalities, or in repartee; and he very seldom told a story, or quoted; and never lectured; and though perpetually discussing, almost never disputed; and though joyous, was no great laugher. What then did he do? He did this:—His mind was constantly full of excellent matter; his spirit was always lively; and his heart was never wrong; and the effusion of these produced the charm. He had no exclusive topics. All subjects were welcome; and all found him ready, if not in knowledge, at least in fancy. But literary and moral speculations were, perhaps, his favourite pastures. And in these, as in any region whatever, for nothing came amiss, he ranged freely, under the play of a gay and reasonable imagination; from no desire of applause, but because it gratified his mental activity. Speaking seemed necessary for his existence. The intellectual fountains were so full, that they were always bubbling over, and it would have been painful to restrain them. For a great talker, he was very little of an usurper. Everybody else had full scope, and indeed was encouraged; and he himself, though profuse, was never long at a time; except perhaps when giving an account of something of which he was the mere narrator, when his length depended on the thing to be told. Amid all his fluency of thought, and all his variety of matter, a great part of the delight of his conversation arose from its moral qualities. Though never assuming the office of a teacher, his goodness of feeling was constantly transpiring. No one could take a walk, or pass a day or an evening with him, without having all his rational and generous tastes confirmed, and a steadier conviction than before of the dependence of happiness on kindness and duty. Let

him be as bold, and as free, and as incautious, and hilarious as he might, no sentiment could escape him that tended to excuse inhumanity or meanness, or that failed to cherish high principles and generous affections. Then the language in which this talent and worth were disclosed ! The very words were a delight. Copious and sparkling, they often imparted nearly as much pleasure as the merry or the tender wisdom they conveyed. Those who left him might easily retire without having any particular saying to report, but never without an admiration of mental richness and striking expression. His respect for conversational power made him like the presence of those who possessed it. But this was not at all necessary for his own excitement, for he never uttered a word for display, and was never in better flow than in the ordinary society of those he was attached to, however humble their powers, and although they could give him no aid but by affection and listening. There was so much in his own head and heart, that, in so far as he was concerned, pouring it out was enjoyment enough. It may appear an odd thing to say, but it is true, that the listener's pleasure was enhanced by the personal littleness of the speaker. A large man could scarcely have thrown off Jeffrey's conversational flowers without exposing himself to ridicule. But the liveliness of the deep thoughts, and the flow of the bright expressions that animated his talk, seemed so natural and appropriate to the figure that uttered them, that they were heard with something of the delight with which the slenderness of the trembling throat, and the quivering of the wings, make us enjoy the strength and clearness of the notes of a little bird.

But it is idle in any one to speak on this subject after what has been said by one of the greatest masters and best critics of conversation. Sir James Mackintosh says, (Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 251:) " We saw, for the first time, Playfair and Jeffrey ; the first, a person very remarkable for under-

standing, calmness, and simplicity ; the second more lively, fertile, and brilliant, than any Scotchman of letters ; with more imagery and illustration added to the knowledge and argumentative powers of his country ; and more sure than any native of this island whom I have seen, to have had splendid success in the literary societies of Paris." If this was true in 1812, when Sir James wrote it, it was much truer in 1834, when Jeffrey left London, and when he had had more experience of life, and had seen a greater variety of people, and had been more ripened by time.

He took his seat on the bench on the 7th of June, 1834. The Scotch Judges are styled *Lords* ; a title to which long usage has associated feelings of reverence in the minds of the people, who could not now be soon made to respect or understand *Mr. Justice*. During its strongly feudalized condition, the landholders of Scotland, who were almost the sole judges, were really known only by the names of their estates. It was an insult, and in some parts of the country it is so still, to call a laird by his personal, instead of his territorial title. While this custom was universal, a man who was raised to the bench naturally took his estate's name with him, because it was the only name that he was known by. Even lairds came, however, in time to be identified by their Christian and surnames. Yet, for a while, the fashion of sinking the individual appellation, and carrying the landed one to the judgment-seat, lingered ; not always from vanity, but because it was natural for landholders to dignify themselves by their estates, and their estates by their judicial office. But this assumption of two names, one official and one personal, and being addressed by the one and subscribing by the other, is wearing out, and will soon disappear entirely. Jeffrey had land enough to entitle him to sink his honoured name in that of his bit of earth ; but, like many others, he did not choose to do it, and became Lord Jeffrey.

He had to be in court at nine, which alarmed him more

than any thing else in his new situation. He tells Mr. James Craig, Edinburgh, one of his most cherished friends, (26th of December, 1834:) "I have certainly had rather hard work, but I do not find it irksome. Even the early rising, which I dreaded the most, proves very bearable. Certainly in the whole of my past life, I never saw so many sun-rises as since the beginning of November, and they have been inexpressibly beautiful."

From the very first moment of his judicial appointment he cast all politics aside; not his interest in them, for this would have been to have relinquished his reason, but his practical interference with them as a party man. If the election of his best friend, and of the best member of parliament, had depended on his vote, that candidate would have lost the return. The most magnificent public dinner ever given in Edinburgh was that to the late Earl Grey, on the 15th of September, 1834, immediately after the first meeting here of the British Association. He sighed at not being there, fresh as he was from all his personal and official connection with the object of the festival. But he would not attend; and his only allusion to it in writing to Mrs. Craig, about the recent scenes, is so faint as scarcely to be visible: "You know we have had a stirring time of it for the last months in these latitudes; first with our *Savans*, and then with our politicians; and that our quiet home has been agitated by the residence of chancellors and other dignitaries, and our provincial dulness enlivened by the resort of vagrant metropolitans without number. But the tumult is now over. The comets have all swept beyond our orbit, and left us to the steadier influences of our old moon and stars; and here we are in our contented obscurity, and well enough pleased with our leisure and stupidity. It is the loveliest weather; so calm, and bright, and warm, that, but for the shortening days, it might still be mistaken for midsummer. And the early twilights only give a more solemn character to its sweetness, and make me think more

deeply and tenderly of the summers that are gone, and the eternal summer that is coming, never to pass away. Well, there is comfort in these thoughts, and *you* will not think them fantastical.”—(5th October, 1834.)

The general course of his life, after becoming a judge, exclusive of that part of it which was passed in court, was, that he was in London or its neighbourhood almost every spring, at Craigerook all autumn, and in Edinburgh all winter; and that the hospitalities of his town and his country residences went on nearly as they used to do. During the sitting of the court, the performance of his official duties exhausted nearly his whole day, the evenings especially; and his spare time, whether during his sittings or in vacation, was given to society, to correspondence, to walking, to lounging in his garden, and to the gratification of his appetite for reading. For the indulgence of this last passion, he was very little indebted to any thing that could be called a library of his own. For a lover of books, and for one who had picked up a few, his collection was most wretched; and so ill cared for that the want even of volumes never disturbed him. The science of binding he knew nothing about, and therefore despised, and most of his books were unbound. These slatternly habits all arose from his believing that books were only meant to be read; and that, therefore, so as their words were visible, nothing else was required. It must have been in a moment of infirmity that such a heretic allowed himself (30th January, 1826) to be made a member of the Bannatyne Club, the only book association of the kind with which he was ever connected.

In 1835 he completed the beauty and comfort of Craigerook by making his last and greatest addition to the house. In doing so he took, and followed the advice of his friend William Playfair, Esq.—an architect of whom Edinburgh is justly proud, and who will leave many monuments of his taste in the edifices that adorn it. This operation forced

him to quit the place for this summer ; and he found a retreat at Skelmorlie, an old castle on the southern shore of the Clyde, (the most beautiful of all British friths,) with the sea at its feet, and glorious prospects of Arran and Argyllshire on the opposite side. “ I have enjoyed my leisure exceedingly ; perhaps, I should say, my *solitude*, and certainly the entire *sobriety*, which (out of solitude) is so difficult for some people to maintain. I have done nothing ever since I came ; to my heart’s content, and with a deep feeling of repose and tranquillity, which, except for hours and half-hours, I have scarcely known for the last five years. I do not rise early ; yet not late. Breakfast leisurely in a cool massive parlour, with deep-set windows on three sides, one looking through a loophole of the wood out on the silver sea ; study the newspapers as a man must do on a remote island ; lounge about in the woods ; read idle snatches of Shakspeare, and Fletcher, and Keats, and Shelley ; sit watching seals, and porpoises, and yachts, and steam-vessels, and clouds playing with the peaks of Arran, and the little waves that are splashing round my feet, and the wild thyme, and the bees, and the white houses gleaming round the shores of the mountains, bays, and promontories before me ; and the shells and pebbles that engaged the leisure of Scipio and Lœlius, in a world in which nothing was like our world but the said shells and pebbles, and the minds of virtuous men resting from their labours. Well, will you not come and see ? only I will not go to Arran, or any other foreign port, on or beyond seas, on any consideration.” “ I have bathed twice, yet I have still dyspepsy. Herrings are scarce, and salmon plenty, though rather of a poor description. The whittings are not so fine as they used to be. Milk and eggs excellent, and (for those who dare eat them) the most beautiful cherries in the world.”—(To me, 25th July, 1835.)

He wrote to me, (22d August, 1835,) that “ The only want I feel is of some vigorous intellect to grapple with.

I do not know whether poor Sir Harry's idiocy of rustication is beginning with me;* but I certainly feel that I read more passively than I used to do, and flatter myself that I am wisely taking in materials for after suggestion, when I am truly storing up food for oblivion only; but I am very resigned any way, and, after three score, perhaps nothing better is to be desired."

Since he only wanted a vigorous intellect to grapple with, I again exhorted him, but not very seriously, for I knew it was in vain, to grapple with his own, by trying some work of original composition. To this he says: "I have been delighting myself with Mackintosh. I only got the book two days ago, and have done nothing but read it ever since. The richness of his mind intoxicates me. And yet do not you think he would have been a happier man, and quite as useful and respectable, if he had not fancied it a duty to write a great book. And is not this question an answer to your exhortation to me to write a little one? I have no sense of duty that way, and feel that the only sure or even probable result of the attempt would be hours and days of anxiety, and unwholesome toil, and a closing scene of mortification."—(28th August, 1835.)

It would have been no such thing. It would have given him occupation, usefulness, and fame. The obstinate weakness of this feeling recurs to us, now that it is all over, with increased pain. No man could more certainly have charmed posterity by some great original work. We have lost it by his periodical writing.†

* Sir Harry Moncrieff used to say that no man long accustomed to the habits of an active city life of business, could retire and muse in the country for six months, without becoming an idiot.

† "You must some day or other bring your thoughts on the philosophy of poetry and poetic expression into the form of a systematic essay; which I shall insist on your publishing with much care. That, and a little treatise on the ethics of common life, and the ways and means of ordinary happiness, are the works which I bespeak from you for after-times."—(Horner to Jeffrey, *Memoirs*, ii. 53.)

However, while at Skelmorlie, he wrote the excellent article published in the Review, in October, (No. 125, art. 11,) in which he records the grounds of his so loving and admiring Sir James.

He was gratified next year by an event which gave him the greatest satisfaction. He had become acquainted with Mr. Andrew Rutherford, soon after the latter had entered the Faculty of Advocates in 1812, and had very early marked and cherished him as a young man of great promise. Their acquaintance soon grew into friendship, and was followed by habits of the most intimate confidence. It was with the greatest delight, therefore, that in the spring of 1837, he witnessed his friend's first advance into public life by his promotion to the office of Solicitor-General. He knew that it opened the way to the higher station of Lord-Advocate, for which he held Mr. Rutherford to be pre-eminently qualified. He was not disappointed. In about two years the solicitor was raised to this situation which he held, with some political interruptions, till 1851, when he became a judge. He was not allowed to accomplish all that he intended; but he did enough to have his official history recorded in some of the wisest changes that have recently improved the legal and economical condition of this country. The statute (11 and 12 Victoria, chap. 36) which dissolves the iron fetters by which, for about 160 years, nearly three-fourths of the whole land in Scotland was made permanently unsaleable, and unattachable for debt, and every acre in the kingdom might be bound up, throughout all ages, in favour of any heirs, or any conditions that the caprice of each unfettered owner might be pleased to prescribe, was his great work. Prejudice prevented him from correcting the absurdities of our marriage law, and from introducing a humane system of police for destitute lunacy; but it may be predicted with absolute certainty that these measures will be passed one day; and on that day he will be remembered. Meanwhile, he did

enough to make his brethren of the bar take the rare step, on his recent elevation to the bench, of recording “the high satisfaction with which they have witnessed the promotion of another distinguished member of the bar—the late Lord-Advocate ; to whom the country and the profession are deeply indebted for important public services ; and expressing their hope that Lord Rutherford may long be enabled to devote the eminent talents which have adorned his professional and official career, to the administration of those laws which his legislative measures have so materially contributed to mature and improve.”—(Faculty Resolution, 23d May, 1851.) Jeffrey did not live to bear a testimony, in the justice of which he would have cordially rejoiced. There was no one, in point of time in the secondary formation of his friendships, to whom, in public proceedings and in private life, he was more thoroughly united ; and the nearness of their two beautiful country places gave them peculiar opportunities of discussion and enjoyment.

On the 9th of March, 1838, he joined a large party who dined together in honour of the late Sir William Allan, whose professional eminence had raised him to the second presidency of the Royal Scottish Academy. Sir William was the immediate object of the meeting ; but it had an indirect and more important reference to that extraordinary rise in art, which, both in the native artists we have retained, and in those we have given England, has distinguished the modern progress of Scotland ; and on account of which the Academy had been recently established. Jeffrey made a striking address ; expressive of his belief, and its reasons, that, in spite of its northern sky, this country might attain as much eminence in art as it had already done in other intellectual pursuits. The thirteen years that have since passed have greatly tended to confirm the soundness of this opinion.

On the 27th of June, 1838, his daughter was married

to William Empson, Esq., Professor of Law at the East India College, Haileybury; a union from which, after the pang of parting with his only child was over, he derived the greatest delight. Besides deepening and extending his domestic affections, it multiplied his refreshing visits to England, and enlivened his autumns by the Empsons' returns to Craigmoray; and it gave him those nice little grandchildren, some of them living with him almost always, in whom his heart was wrapt.

In 1840 he tried his hand, for the first time, upon a monumental inscription. It was for the foundation stone of Scott's Monument. He was requested by the committee to furnish it, but refused at first, believing himself incapable. At last, as he was walking out one day to Craigmoray, it occurred to him as an odd thing to write what was meant never to be seen, and this led him on, and before he had reached home, he had composed the following rather striking statement:—

“ THIS GRAVEN PLATE,
DEPOSITED IN THE BASE OF A VOTIVE BUILDING
ON THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF AUGUST IN THE YEAR OF CHRIST 1840,
AND DESTINED NEVER TO SEE THE LIGHT AGAIN
TILL THE SURROUNDING STRUCTURES ARE CRUMBED TO DUST
BY THE DECAY OF TIME, OR BY HUMAN OR ELEMENTAL VIOLENCE,
MAY THEN TESTIFY TO A DISTANT POSTERITY THAT
THE CITIZENS OF EDINBURGH BEGAN ON THAT DAY
TO RAISE AN EFFIGY AND AN ARCHITECTURAL MONUMENT
TO THE MEMORY OF SIR WALTER SCOTT;
WHOSE ADMIRABLE WRITINGS WERE THEN ALLOWED
TO HAVE GIVEN MORE DELIGHT, AND SUGGESTED BETTER FEELINGS
TO A LARGER CLASS OF READERS IN EVERY RANK OF SOCIETY
THAN THOSE OF ANY OTHER AUTHOR,
WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SHAKESPEARE ALONE:
AND WHICH THEREFORE WERE THOUGHT LIKELY TO BE REMEMBERED
LONG AFTER THIS ACT OF GRATITUDE,
ON THE PART OF THE FIRST GENERATION OF HIS ADMIRERS,
SHOULD BE FORGOTTEN.
HE WAS BORN AT EDINBURGH 15TH AUGUST, 1771;
AND DIED AT ABBOTSFORD, 21ST SEPTEMBER, 1832.”

In the autumn of this year he wrote the article on Wilberforce's Correspondence, which was published in No. 145 of the Review.

On Saturday, the 5th of June, 1841, instead of receiving the engaged Craigerook party, he gave his friends a dreadful fright by fainting in court. The attack was so severe and so sudden, that if his friend Mr. Thomas Maitland,* who happened to be pleading before him, had not made a spring and caught him, he must have fallen. He soon recovered from the direct attack, which, in itself, was found not to be material, though by no means insignificant as a symptom. In renewing the party for the Saturday following, he hopes that they will come, “to let me repair, in some degree, *the shabby trick I played you last week.*”

But this trick, or its cause, affected him longer than he anticipated. He could not resume the performance of his duties in court, beyond a few feeble attempts, that session; and after lingering in Edinburgh, which was thought safer than Craigerook, till August, he went to Haileybury. He was soon attacked there so severely by bronchitis, that his life was scarcely preserved. Foreseeing that he could not be in court when it met about the middle of November, he was inclined to resign instantly. Being exhorted to think well before taking such a step, as there might be opposite views even of its high-mindedness, he said, “I very much agree with you as to resignation. Nothing in this world shall induce me to retain office a single hour after I am *permanently* disabled from its duties. *That I have always* thought nothing less indeed than the meanest of *dishonesties.* But, on the other hand, when the strong probability is that the disability will prove *temporary* only, there would plainly be a similar dishonesty in snatching at idleness, and a retiring allowance, by representing it as permanent.”—(To me, 30th October, 1841.)

* Since Solicitor-General, and afterward Lord Dundrennan, one of the judges.

Application was made to the Home Office for leave of absence, and this was at once granted in very handsome terms.

He went to London about the 17th of November for advice, and remained there for some months. A formal explanation of his exact state, though not justifying any despair, was enough to have alarmed most men, but was cheerfully received by him. “I had my grand consultation of *three* doctors on Sunday, having called in Chambers in aid of the other two ; and the result was very much, as I think I told you, the council of two had intimated before, viz. that though there was no organic, or special progressive disease, I must not expect *ever* to be much better than I now am, and should lay my account with always suffering in a degree from weak and disordered circulation, and being liable to occasional bronchial irritation. Few people, they said, get to my time of life without finding some of the vital functions impaired or disordered, and I had used up my vitality, and tasked my powers, they believed, a great deal more prodigally than the common run of their patients. Still, however, as all the machinery seemed substantially sound, and energy enough left still to work it for ordinary purposes, they thought, by due care and caution, and sparing myself, both mind and body, for the future, they saw no cause why I should not merely live on in good comfort for many years to come, but even improve considerably on my present condition ; and at all events to such an extent as to enable me to do all the work that ought ever to be required from a person of my standing. Now this, it must be owned, is not over and above encouraging, and amounts, I think, to a pretty distinct intimation that my *May* of life (though there is some impudence, I own, in my usurping the name of that month) is fallen into the sere and yellow leaf, and that I must hereafter live a regulated, careful, valetudinarian sort of life. No more dining out, or giving dinners, or appearing at the best like a death’s

head at these festivals, and puling upon two slices of meat and two glasses of sherry ! No going out at night, or sitting up late to write or read, wearing trot cosies and comforters, taking no long fast walks, and shrinking from autumn showers and spring breezes. I do not pretend to like such an Avenir ; but as I suppose I cannot help myself, I try to make the best of it, and if I can only make sure of that ‘ which should accompany old age,’ and escape the danger of ‘ curses’ or ‘ mouth honour,’ I dare say I shall get on very well ; only I am afraid I shall be impatient till I see some of my brothers lose their tails also.”—(To me, 22d February, 1842.)

He gave a similar account of his being fixed, “ with regimen and restraints,” “ on a lower level of vitality,” to Mr. Rutherford, and adds, “ I hope I shall submit to them cheerfully, and even acquire a taste for the hermit and self-denying life which I am now entering. But just at present, I must honestly confess, I would have preferred sticking a little longer to my pleasant vices ; and cannot help feeling, too, like the voluptuaries in Juvenal, upon whom, while they are still calling for wine, women, and garlands, ‘ obrepit non intelleeta Senectus.’ ”

His letters and his conversations throughout this long illness, and throughout all his bodily weaknesses, were always so full of the details and the severities of his afflictions, that a stranger might conclude, either that his health was generally hopeless, or that he was a poor-spirited patient. But the truth is just the reverse. Though seized by one or two dangerous attacks, and peculiarly subject to the encroaching infirmities of age, his life was on the whole healthy, and when necessary, there could scarcely be a more resolute sufferer. But a restless fancy, and an unfortunate sprinkling of medical knowledge, were apt to set him a speculating on the structure and working of his own system ; and on this topic, so fertile and interesting to every invalid, he of course got easily eloquent, generally to the

diversion of others.. One of the difficulties that all his doctors had to encounter was, to hear, and then to refute, or to evade, the theories of the patient. But when any thing had to be submitted to, passively or actively, he did it bravely. And the moment that the self-description or self-condolence was over, or even while it was going on, he was ready for his friends. For example, when he went from Haileybury to London, on the 17th of November, 1841, he writes that they were obliged to have in the carriage “such wrappings, and hot water, and wax candles.” But in a day or two he was receiving visitors—in a few more he was driving out—and long before the month was over, “I continue to drive out every day, and think I am less exhausted by it than at first. I have seen several people for very short visits—Sydney Smith, Macaulay, Lady Theresa Lister, Miss Berry, Rogers, Hallam, Brougham, Lord Campbell, Carlyle, and a few more—all of whom behaved very well in going away soon, and allowing me to speak but little, except ——, who sat an hour, and made me talk so much, I coughed all the evening after. I am to see Dickens to-morrow, who is just returned from the country in perfect health, and luxuriating in the honeymoon of his year of idleness.”—(To me, 30th November, 1842.)

He left London about the middle of March, (1842,) and went for about two months to Clifton, and then to Haileybury, previous to his return to Edinburgh. At Haileybury he received intelligence of the sudden death of Sir Charles Bell, which took place in England on the 29th of April. “This is a sad blow, the loss of good, kind-hearted, happy Charlie Bell. It met me here on my arrival. I do not know whether poor George or his wife is most to be pitied, but the loss will be terrible and *irreparable* to both. Except George himself, I have not so old and intimate a friend left, and it may be a kind of comfort to think that I cannot have many more such losses to bear. We were familiar from boyhood, and though much separated from

residence and occupation, never had a notion of alienation, or a cessation of that cordiality and reliance on each other's affection, which is also a comfort even now."—(To me, 8th May, 1842.*)

He resumed his place in court, (in May, 1842,) in a very good state, and continued in Scotland all the rest of this year, mostly at home, and in full judicial vigour.

In December he had to endure another severe affliction. Mr. Robert Morehead died on the 13th of that month. His feelings on this visitation were thus expressed in a letter to the widow: "My dear Margaret—I need not say that Phemie's communication gave us a sharp pang, and the event must have been longer and more clearly foreseen by you, I imagine, than even by us. But when the blow does at last fall, these anticipations do not save us from a shock; and in the case of those whose strength has been impaired by watching while their thoughts have been partly dis-

* Jeffrey afterward wrote the following Epitaph, which is now on a tablet in the parish church of Hallow, near Worcester, where Sir Charles was buried:—

SACRED TO THE MEMORY
of
SIR CHARLES BELL,
Who, after unfolding
With unrivalled sagacity, patience, and success,
The wonderful structure of our mortal bodies,
Esteemed lightly of his greatest discoveries,
Except only
As they tended to impress himself and others
With a deeper sense
of
The infinite wisdom and ineffable goodness
of
The Almighty Creator.

He was born at Edinburgh in 1774,
And died in England, 29th of April, 1842.

tracted by constant occupation, I fear it is often felt more severely than they themselves are prepared for. I shall therefore be anxious to learn that you and dear Lockey and Phemie have not suffered, and that you are bearing this great affliction with courage and resignation. It must always be a great consolation to you to know that you not only soothed and cheered his closing days by your kind and devoted attention, but that to your constant and judicious care of him for many preceding years he was indebted, not only for the chief enjoyments of these years, but most probably for their being added to his existence. For myself, though unavoidably much separated from him of late years, I can truly say that my love and regard for him have never suffered a moment's abatement; and that though it is sad enough, God knows, to have to lament the loss of nearly the last of my friends of early life, it is still very gratifying to look back upon an intimacy of more than half a century with the feeling that there never was an hour of misunderstanding between us, nor a chill in the warmth, or a passing cloud on the brightness of our mutual affection. When you can recur to it without too much pain, I think I should like to have a more particular account of his last days, and to know how his patience and trust in the Great Being to whom he was returning, sustained him through the final struggle. I shall likewise be glad, by and by, to have a copy of the work which occupied so many of his parting hours; and, above all, to learn what changes, if any, in your plans of life and domestic arrangements this removal of the head of the house is likely to occasion. Poor little Mary was very greatly moved, I understand, when the melancholy news was broken to her. Charlotte and I have had long talks of you ever since, as well as good Martha Brown, who has this morning returned to Langfinc."—(16th December, 1842.)

On the 22d of November of this year, (1842,) a material change took place in his judicial position. According to

usage, he had hitherto been acting in a court by himself, where decisions are seldom given openly and verbally, but in the form of written judgments, with notes explanatory of their reasons, all prepared after debate and consideration of written papers at home, and every adjudication liable to the review of another branch of the court. Except for its comparative security, this situation was not in all respects unfavourable for Lord Jeffrey. It tended to repress his discursiveness, and enabled him to enrich the reports with many admirable opinions written deliberately by himself. But he was now removed into the first of the two divisions into which the Court of Session is separated, where he had three brother judges, and more publicity; where all causes were argued, and all judgments delivered, in open court; and there was no review except in the House of Lords. This was a more difficult and responsible position. He would have succeeded with any of his brethren, and they with him; but he was certainly happily placed beside the three with whom it was his lot to act. They were all men of talent and learning, fond of their work, and very friendly toward each other; men by whom even Jeffrey's intellect was sharpened, and before whom he could never be too ingenious without detection. Nothing higher can be said of any tribunal than that, in addition to the various powers of Lord Jeffrey, it contained the long experience and great practical sagacity of the Lord President Boyle; the acute and intelligent logic of Lord Fullerton,—combining, with rare felicity, the often separated qualities of great fineness with great soundness of understanding; and the curious talent of Lord Mackenzie—amiable amid the fiercest contention, and solving in playfulness the abstrusest difficulties; whose gentleness of disposition and awkward feebleness of manner contrasted amusingly with the riches of a very working mind; which, whether exercised in courts or in society, was always intrepid and original. That was as good a court as Scotland

ever saw ; and these four men would have elevated any judicial tribunal, in any country to the law of which they might have been trained. Jeffrey was much attached to them all. Fullerton, indeed, and Mackenzie, were his old personal friends.

Notwithstanding one questionable habit, the judicial duties have rarely been better performed than they were by him. His ability need not be mentioned—nor the sensitiveness of his candour—nor his general aptitude for the law. Surpassed, perhaps, by one or two in some of the more mystical depths of the law of real property, his general legal learning was more than sufficient to enable him, after ordinary argument, to form sound views, and to defend them, even on these subjects. The industry that had turned the vivacity of his youth to account, and had marked all his progress, followed him to the bench. His opinions were always given fully, and with great liveliness, and great felicity of illustration. His patience, for so quick a person, was nearly incredible. He literally never tired of argument, and therefore had rather a leaning against all devices for shortening proceedings not on matters of mere form. This was partly the result of a benevolent anxiety to make parties certain that they had at least been fully heard ; but it also proceeded from his own pleasure in the game. Though not exactly denying the necessity of rules for ending discussion, he scarcely liked them ; and half pitied a party whose desire to say still more on his own matter, which was every thing to him, was resisted for the convenience of other matters, for which he cared nothing ; and has been known to say, that if there was only one cause in the world it would never end ; and why should it ? What are other causes to a man who has not done with his own ? He who was inclined to hold this paradox must have been a very patient judge. It was his patient activity that reconciled him to it, even as a paradox.

The questionable thing in his judicial manner consisted

in an adherence to the same tendency that had sometimes impaired his force at the bar—speaking too often and too long. He had no idea of sitting, like an oracle, silent, and looking wise ; and then, having got it all in, announcing the result in as many calm words as were necessary, and in no more. Delighted with the play, instead of waiting passively till the truth should emerge, he put himself, from the very first, into the position of an inquirer, whose duty it was to extract it by active processes. His error lay in not perceiving that it would be much better extracted for him by counsel than it generally can be by a judge. But disbelieving this, or disregarding it, his way was to carry on a running margin of questions, and suppositions, and comments, through the whole length of the argument. There are few judges in whom this habit would be tolerated. It is disagreeable to counsel, disturbs other members of the court, and exposes the individual to inaccurate explanation and to premature impression. But, as done by Jeffrey, it had every alleviation that such a practice admits of. It was done with great talent ; with perfect gentleness and urbanity ; solely from an anxiety to reach justice ; with no danger to the ultimate formation of his opinion ; and with such kindly liveliness, that the very counsel who was stranded by it liked the quarter from which the gale had blown. Accordingly, he was exceedingly popular with everybody, particularly with the bar ; and the judicial character could not be more revered than it was in him by the public.

It was in the month of May, 1843, that the Established Church of Scotland was rent in twain, by the secession of those who formed themselves into the Free Church. However anxious to avoid polemical matter, it would be wrong not to state what Lord Jeffrey's opinion was, since he had a very decided one, on this the greatest event that has occurred in Scotland since the rebellion in 1745, if not since the Union.

The contest at first was merely about patronage. The owners or patrons of livings insisted that the practice of their presentees being inducted into parishes, if they were under no legal disqualification, however odious they might be to the parishioners, which practice had subsisted for a considerable period, should be continued ; while the people maintained that this practice was a mere abuse, and one so offensive that it had for 100 years been the source of all the dissent by which the church had been weakened, and that popular unacceptability was of itself a ground on which the church courts were entitled to reject. Each of these views had its party in the General Assembly. But this point was soon lost sight of, absorbed in the far more vital question, whether the church had any spiritual jurisdiction independent of the control of the civil power. This became the question on which the longer coherence of the elements of the church depended. The judicial determination was, in effect, that no such jurisdiction existed. This was not the adjudication of any abstract political or ecclesiastical nicety. It was the declaration, and as those who protested against it held, the introduction, of a principle which affected the whole practical being and management of the Establishment. On this decision being pronounced, those who had claimed this jurisdiction, which they deemed an essential and indispensable part of what they had always understood to be their church, felt they had no course except to leave a community to which, as it was now explained, they had never sworn allegiance. They accordingly seceded. And the result has been this :—

Out of an Established clergy of about 1000 or 1100 ministers, 453 left the Establishment, followed in general by almost their whole congregations and elders. Their adherents in that true Church of Scotland (as they deem it) which then arose, have been increasing ever since, and now form 739 sanctioned congregations, besides 98 preaching stations ; being 837 congregations in all. Deducting

charges that are vacant, preaching stations, and congregations that have not yet called ministers, which three classes are supplied by authorized probationers, there are 623 ministers on the public Sustentation Fund. About 690 churches have been built, between 400 and 500 manses, about 400 school-houses, and a college. For these and other purposes, the people have contributed about three millions of pounds sterling ; of which £2,475,616 has been paid into the public account, and above £500,000 has been expended locally.

No public event had occurred in Lord Jeffrey's time, in which he took a deeper interest. He foresaw what was coming above a year before it happened, and then said : “I am grieved to the heart at the prospects of our church, but I think her doom is sealed ; all which might have been prevented, had,” &c. “And what a thing it is that the —— should have brought upon Scotland the infinite misery of her Established Church being that of a minority of her people, or at least of her religious people.”—(To me, 2d February, 1842.) And within a few weeks of the event, referring to one of the unfortunate discussions by which it almost seemed as if the object had been to hide the approach of the catastrophe, instead of intelligently trying to avert it, he said : “Did you ever see a more tyrannical or short-sighted discussion than that on our poor church in the House of Lords. I am anxious to hear what her champions and martyrs are now doing, and what is understood to be their plan of operation at the Assembly. It will be a strange scene any way, and I suppose there will be a separation into two Assemblies,” &c.—(To me, 4th April, 1843.)

He declared his opinion from the bench, to be hostile to what he held to be the novelty sanctioned by a majority of his brethren, and confirmed in the House of Lords ; and, on the other aspects of the case, looking at them without ecclesiastical bigotry, ambition, or faction, of which he

never had the very slightest touch, and solely with a secular eye, his feelings were entirely with the people.

His view was, that in theory, and while matters are all open, every pretence of exclusive ecclesiastical jurisdiction is to be received with distrust and alarm; but that the Church of Scotland, which had owed its existence to its defiance of the civil supremacy that had been claimed by the Stuarts, had been revived when the Stuarts were put down, as it had been originally founded on the very principle of its independence in spiritual matters; that in the modern conflict it was demanding nothing but what had immemorially been assumed in practice, and even in judicial practice, to be its right; that instead of implying ecclesiastical tyranny, the system had worked so well that there never was a church better fitted for the people, or to which the people were more attached; that though, as usual in such collisions, there were faults and extravagances on all sides, the dispute might have been adjusted, if government had interfered under a due intelligence of the danger; but that deluded by the error that this was not a question with the people, but only with a few restless priests, and alarmed for English consequences, and smiling at the idea of clergymen renouncing livings, it virtually abdicated its authority, and never put itself into the state of mind necessary for averting a danger which it was assured did not exist; that the calamity might have been almost avoided by the mere concessions that were made to the people after it had occurred; that the church, as expounded, being a thing that they had never understood it to be, honest men who held this opinion could do nothing but leave it; that the heroism with which this was done made him "*proud of his country;*" and that the magnificent sacrifices by which, year after year, the secession had been followed, showed the strong sincerity and the genuine Scotticism of the principles on which the movement had depended.

He was painfully afflicted this autumn by the death of

George Joseph Bell, (2d September, 1843,) one of his earliest friends ; an honest and ill-used man.

Though steadily resisting all exhortations to write a new book, he was this year induced to publish parts of his old ones in a new form. His selected and arranged “*Contributions to the Edinburgh Review*,” were published in November ; with an amiable and candid preface, becoming his age and position. Many articles of greater power are left buried in the mass of the original work, but those he has chosen to avow derive a charm from their freedom from all factious feelings and interests, and from their recording that enduring literature and philosophy, to which he delighted to recur in the calmness of advanced life, and which, in the midst of all his contentions, had been the prevailing enjoyments of his earlier years.

He sent me a copy of the book with the following letter : “ My dear C., Though I *give* scarcely any of these books, I must send one to you, *ex debito justitiae*, since it was truly by your, not encouragement or advice, but command and objurgation, that I was induced to set about the re-publication. On this account I once thought of dedicating it to you ; but considering the nature of the work, I ultimately thought it better to inscribe it to one who had so much more connection with the Review. But you must not imagine that I do not hold you equally responsible for all the blame it may draw on me, as if your name had figured on the front of it ; as you know very well that he who *hounds on* any one, under his authority, to the commission of an improper act, is always regarded as the really guilty party. I hope you will think the preface long enough, and that as much is said in laud of the Review, as it was fitting for one of its founders to say. I trust, too, that you will not be scandalized at the *very moral* tone of my own individual professions. And so God bless you, my dear Cockburn. Ever very affectionately yours.”—(25 Moray Place, 25th November, 1843.)

He was materially assisted in the preparation of these volumes by his friend Mr. Thomas Maitland, who helped him in many details with which he would otherwise have been perplexed. In sending him a copy of the work, he says: "You at all events are bound to judge of it with indulgence, since you cannot deny that you not only counselled the undertaking, but tempted me to engage in it by putting into my hands a sort of clue to the labyrinth, in which I do not know that I should otherwise have trusted myself. I must hope, too, that some little regard for the author, personally, will induce you to give him what countenance you can on this occasion."—(25th November, 1843.) Mr. Maitland had been Solicitor-General before this, and was so again in 1846. In February, 1850, he became Jeffrey's successor on the bench, with the title of Lord Dundrennan. But after too short a seat there, though long enough to enable him to give the highest promises of judicial excellence, he was unexpectedly, and to the deep sorrow of his friends and of the public, withdrawn from us on the 10th of June, 1851.

Though now above seventy, his intellect was as vigorous and his heart as sunny as ever. But he wisely began to think of himself as an old, or, at least, as a feeble man. Most of his letters, about this time and afterward, contain striking and pleasing accounts of his declining state. "My health," says he to Mrs. Fletcher, "after which you inquire so kindly, is weak enough certainly; but chiefly from a feeble circulation, and not attended with any worse suffering than a good deal of languor and weakness, unaccompanied, I am glad to say, either by any depression of spirits or abatement of mental alacrity. I have got through our summer term without being a day out of court, and as alert in it, I believe, as any of my brethren. But I have been obliged to observe a strict regimen, and to take a great deal more care of myself every way than is at all suitable to my genius or habits. However, I con-

tinue to hobble along the broken arches with as good a grace as most of my fellow travellers, and wait with tranquillity for the close, which cannot be very distant." — (Craigcrook, 24th July, 1844.)

This lady is the widow of his earliest patron, Mr. Archibald Fletcher, a person toward whom his regard, like that of all who have the happiness of knowing her, rose into affectionate veneration.

The grace with which he submitted to the inevitable doom was indeed very remarkable. His good affections were all retained and cherished; while the feelings connected with irritating passions and disquieting pursuits were as entirely quenched as they ever can be in this life. When not employed judicially, which to him was always an agreeable occupation, old friends, young friends, especially the dear grandchildren, books, and external nature, were what he lived in; and all his prospects of the gradual and now rapid closing of life were composed and reasonable. He mellowed so sweetly, that there was no period of his life when he attracted more respect and affection than during its last five years.

Time also changed his outward appearance. The bright manly eye remained, and the expressive energy of the lips, and the clear sweet voice, and the erect rapid gait. But the dark complexion had become pale, the black hair gray, the throat told too often of its weakness, the small person had become still smaller, and the whole figure evinced the necessity of great care.

Though preserving an undiminished relish of society, he could not indulge it as formerly; and, among other privations, was obliged to renounce dinners, either given or received. To compensate for this, he (Nov. 1844) made a sort of revival of the social cheerfulness of the old Edinburgh supper, without what would now be thought its convivial coarseness. His house was open to his friends, generally without invitations, every Tuesday and Friday

evening, from about nine to twelve, during the four winter months. The party usually consisted of from about ten to about twenty, or even thirty ladies and gentlemen ; who, instead of being left to freeze in ceremony, or to evaporate in words, sat at round tables, multiplied according to the demand, to a moderate but not entirely a nominal refection. It is needless to say, that such an arrangement at that hour produced excellent parties. He himself was always in great talk ; especially with the two or three whom he detained after the rest were gone. These most agreeable meetings were kept up till the winter of 1848, when Mrs. Jeffrey's illness stopped them.

He asks in one of his letters—“ Has anybody thought of taking up my Tuesday and Friday evenings ? Which, upon looking back to them, seem to me like a faint, but not quite unsuccessful, revival of a style of society which was thought to have some attractions in the hands of Dugald Stewart and some others ; though I fear we have now fallen in an age too late for such a revival, and that nothing but an amiable consideration for my infirmities could have given it the success it had.”—(To me, Haileybury, 26th March, 1845.)

His critical reputation made him be very frequently applied to for advice by persons disposed but afraid to publish ; and Sir Walter himself was scarcely readier to assist them. I was asked, about this period, to get his opinion of a MS. poem by Mr. James Ballantine, of Edinburgh. He gave it, with considerable praise, but with an advice, upon the whole, against publication, and decidedly against the adoption of verse as a profession. Referring to this admonition, he says, in another part of the preceding letter, “ I hope you got (naming the poem) back in safety, and have softened my dehortative to the ingenious, and, I am persuaded, amiable author.” Nobody could stand so kindly administered an admonition better than Mr. Ballantine, because his other publications, both in

verse and in prose, particularly his "*Gaberlunzie's Wallet*," a work which Burns would not have been anxious to disown, have given him a very high place among the writers of native Scotch. He is one of the sensible men who can combine business with literature; making the muses grace the business, and the business feed the muses.

He read a good deal; and present amusement being the only object, nothing rational came amiss. "In the mean time, you will be glad to hear that I am very tranquil, and, for the most part, very happy and comfortable. I sleep rather better than usual, have no actual pain, and very little oppression or discomfort, so urgent as to prevent me from interesting myself, quite as much as formerly, in reading and conversation. I read all the Pilgrim's Progress (for the first time for fifty years, I believe) yesterday and the day before; and I am now busy with the Life of Wycliffe, and the Memoirs of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon. So you see I am in a very godly course of study." (To me, 4th September, 1844.)

"And I have been reading Eldon's Life and Correspondence, in which there is much that is curious and instructive; and also Burke's, which is of a higher pitch, to be sure, and to me full of the deepest interest and delight. The greatest and most accomplished intellect which England has produced for centuries, and of a noble and lovable nature."—(Haileybury, 4th September, 1844.)

"I am generally able, however, to take several short walks every day, and read and converse, for the most part, as pleasantly as ever. I have read a good deal, and, if with little improvement, at least with much satisfaction, almost all Arnold's writings, and especially his Introductory Letter on History, which, though a hasty and rash production, and with great gaps, is full of good thoughts and masterly views; many French historical and philosophical works of Thiers, Mignet, Barante, and others; most of Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, Vaughan's Life of Wycliffe, and many bio-

graphies of missionaries, chancellors, and other worthies, together with some novels, English and French, and (translated) German, besides the saintly publications of which I made mention in my last. We have still summer here." (Haileybury, 18th September, 1844.)

The Reverend Sidney Smith died on the 22d of February, 1845. Jeffrey's feelings on this calamity are expressed in the following letter to Mr. Smith's daughter, Mrs. Holland, on his first seeing her father's "Fragment on the Irish Roman Catholic Church:" "E. I. College, Hertford, 2d April, 1845. My very dear Saba—I have felt several times, in the last six weeks, that I ought to have written to some of you. But, in truth, my dear child, I had not the courage; and to-day I do it, not so much because I have the courage, as because I cannot help it. That startling and matchless *fragment* was laid on my table this morning, and before I had read out the first sentence, the *real presence* of my beloved and incomparable friend was so brought before me, in all his brilliancy, benevolence, and flashing decision, that I seemed again to hear his voice, and read in his eye,—and burst into an agony of crying. I went through the whole in the same state of feeling,—my fancy kindled, and my intellect illumined, but my heart struck through with the sense of our loss, so suddenly and deeply impressed by this seeming restoration. I do not think he ever wrote any thing so good, and I feel, mournfully, that there is no one now alive who could have so written. The effect, I am persuaded, will be greater than from any of his other publications. It is a voice from the grave. It relieves me to say all this, and you must forgive it—God bless you all! I have been here ten days with my daughter and grandchildren, as well as I have been through the winter, and living an innocent, quiet, patriarchal life, in love, peace, and sobriety. I merely passed through London, and do not feel tempted to encounter its

perils or seductions. Yet I must run up for a day or two to have one more look of the friends I love there."

He was in the south of England, as usual, in 1846, and says of himself, while at Salterton: "Empson is back at his work. The rest wait for me; all very well, and very patient. Beautiful weather on the whole, though not warm; thermometer very steady, between fifty-two and fifty-eight, and much sunshine and calm, with a fine deep murmuring sea. I creep out twice a day, and lead a dreamy, pensive, patient, poetical sort of existence, without energy, and without ennui, *fallentis semita vitae*. I think I could muse on here contentedly enough till the end. It would save trouble."—(Salterton, 30th April, 1846.)

And to Mrs. Smith, he says, from Derby, where he had been taken ill, on his way home: "I have indeed been very ill, and recover but very slowly; but I have little actual suffering, and hope to be a little less feeble and shaky yet before I die. Fortunately, I have no anxiety, no low spirits, though the animal vitality is at times low enough, God knows! My affections and my enjoyment of beautiful nature, I thank heaven, are as fresh and lively as in the first poetical days of my youth; and with these, there is nothing very miserable in the infirmities of age. We are taking two of our grandchildren down with us, and hope to have the whole household reunited at Craigerooke in the first days of July. They are all (except the poor patriarch who tells you so) in the full flush of hope and gayety, and would make a brightness in a darker home than mine."

Notwithstanding all this, he arrived here in a very tolerable condition, and did his public duty effectually, and enjoyed his friends as much as ever, though in a quieter way.

His surviving sister, Mrs. Brown, died this autumn. No brother and sister could love each other more tenderly.

He went to the Isle of Wight in spring, 1847, from which he writes to Mrs. Craig: "It is a great delight to me to have still, at my age, so many whom I can call old

friends, and I have every day more reason to applaud myself for having, through life, been able to attach myself to young persons; since, if it were not so, I should now be without any cordial or secure affections, and fit only to enact the Methuselah of the family to my poor grandchildren."—(16th April, 1847.) After leaving that place, and getting to London, he gives this account of his recent life:—"We are just back from three weeks' very sweet, tranquil, and innocent seclusion in the Isle of Wight, which we have left with much affection, and some regret; having sauntered and mused away our hours in full sympathy with the beautiful nature around us, and in cordial affection, and entire independence of each other." "We took a tender farewell of our Shanklin Oreads and Nereids yesterday, and after a rumbling drive across the island, and a tumbling voyage across the high swelling green waters, stopped with our whole patriarchal household of four children and four nurses, at the very best hotel in England, (the railway hotel at Gosport;) from which we came whizzing up about two hours ago by an express train, ninety miles in two hours and a quarter."—(To me, London, 4th May, 1847.)

Before leaving Edinburgh, he had sent £50 in aid of the Edinburgh Ragged School, in the establishment of which the Reverend Dr. Guthrie, a man of unwearying benevolence, chiefly in the haunts of neglected destitution, and one of the most eloquent of living preachers, took so able and effective a lead. His hope was that the school was to be open, honestly and liberally, to children of all denominations; but being told, whether accurately or not, that there was some doubt about this, and being asked to interfere, he refused, saying, "I have resolved not to make my little donation to Guthrie's schools a title to interfere and lecture about their management." "The spirit you refer to is lamentable and unaccountable enough, but good will be done in spite of it; and we really must not

lose heart, or hope, or even temper, because crotchets with which we have no sympathy make other good men not quite comfortable coadjutors in our notions of benevolence.”—(To me, 4th May, 1847.)

There was no one of the friends of his later acquisition for whom he had greater admiration or regard than Mr. Macaulay; and he testified the interest which he took in this great writer’s fame by a proceeding, which, considering his age and position, is not unworthy of being told. This judge, of seventy-four, revised the proof-sheets of the first two volumes of the *History of England*, with the diligence and minute care of a corrector of the press toiling for bread;—not merely suggesting changes in the matter and the expression, but attending to the very commas and colons—a task which, though humble, could not be useless, because it was one at which long practice had made him very skilful. Indeed, he used to boast that it was one of his peculiar excellences. On returning a proof to an editor of the *Review*, he says, “I have myself rectified most of the errors, and made many valuable verbal improvements in a small way. But my great task has been with the punctuation—on which I have, as usual, acquitted myself to admiration. And indeed this is the department of literature on which I feel that I most excel, and on which I am therefore most willing now to stake my reputation!!”

During the autumn of this year he contributed his last article to the *Review*. It was the able and elaborate paper on the claims of Watt and Cavendish as the discoverers of the composition of water, which was published in January, 1848. It would have been better perhaps if his final effort had been on a subject more congenial to his favourite tastes. But whether he shall turn out to be right, or to be wrong, in assigning the palm to his friend Watt, there can be no question as to the ability with which the evidence is discussed. He was always skilful in the art

of arraying scientific proof. It is scarcely possible to resist the reasoning of his article in favour of Mr. Clerk being the inventor of the manœuvre of breaking the enemy's line in naval war, (No. 101, art. 1;) and yet there is an opposite and very reasonable view of this matter among good judges.

This year (1848) was clouded by several afflictions. Mrs. Jeffrey was taken dangerously ill at Haileybury in spring; and though she got better in the course of the year, she never made an entire recovery. His sufferings on this account were very severe. His brother John died on the 2d of July. And in a few weeks after this he had to submit to an operation for the extraction of a small wen in his leg. It was performed, with his usual skill, by Mr. Syme. Though slight in its own nature, it was severe on his nervous temperament, and compelled him to be cautious for a considerable time.

The year 1849, the last of his life, was passed wholly in Scotland.

His sister-in-law, Mrs. Robert Morehead, being very ill, he wrote a letter to her beginning thus:—"Edinburgh, 9th February, 1849.—My ever dear Margaret, I cannot tell you how much I have been grieved by the account of your cruel illness. You are almost the only friend of my early life left to me in the world, and it is sad, indeed, to think of suffering and dangers gathering round you in the evening of our day. Both Charlotte and I feel very deeply for your condition. But *I* have feelings and recollections in which she can have no share, and often find myself dwelling, in my sleepless nights, on the scenes of our youthful intimacy, and the dawnings of that cordial affection which it is a great consolation to think has ever subsisted unbroken between 'us.' " "And so heaven bless and keep you ever, my very dear Margaret. I wish I could write to you with a lighter heart; but it is a true and a loving one, at any rate, and *that* is a soothing in all sorrows;

and I trust that the assurance of it may bring some lightening of affliction to you. With kindest remembrances to all your family."

She died on the 18th of that month.

The prize which he had founded when Rector of Glasgow, though regularly awarded, had never been finally arranged. On the 6th of November, 1849, he wrote a full business letter to Principal Macfarlane, putting it on a permanent footing. He directs the interest of the money to be laid out annually on a gold medal, on one side of which the name of the gainer shall be engraved, and on the other the words "Præmium Solenne in Academia Glasguensi, Francisci Jeffrey Alumni olim, non immemoris, Anno 1820 Rectoris, Donum." This medal is to be given, by the votes of his class fellows, to the most distinguished student in the Greek class. The letter ends thus,—"You, Sir, have long been the only member of your society who can remember me as a student within its walls, and it is with a mournful pleasure that I take this opportunity of bringing myself individually to your recollection, and soliciting, for old acquaintance' sake, some share of your indulgent regard. Since those days of our early youth, our ways of life have been widely apart; but I can say with truth, that I have always cherished a tender and grateful recollection of the scenes in which we first met, and never ceased to take an interest in the pleasing accounts that have reached me of the prosperity and distinction to which you have attained. With my best wishes for their long continuance and increase, and with every sentiment of respect and esteem, believe me always."

Three days after this he left Craigerook and came to Edinburgh for the winter. Before coming away he wrote to the Empsons. "Craigerook, Friday, 9th November, 1849, two o'clock.—Bless you, my dears. *Novissima hoc in agro conscribenda!* I have made a last lustration of all my walks and haunts, and taken a long farewell of garden,

and terrace, and flowers, seas and shores, spiry towers, and autumnal fields. I always bethink me that I may never see them again. And one day that thought will be a fact; and every year the odds run up terribly for such a consummation. But it will not be the sooner for being anticipated, and the anticipation brings no real sorrow with it."

As Mrs. Jeffrey continued to improve, he lived happily and quietly, and did his official work with alacrity and success. Even when the scene was just about to close, there were some gratifying exhibitions of his inextinguishable kindness of spirit. On the 4th and on the 6th of January, 1850, he sent two letters of advice and encouragement, one to Mr. Alexander MacLagan of Edinburgh, and one to Mr. John Crawford of Alloa, each of whom had presented him with a volume of his poems. Instead of turning from them in silence, he made each an answer so warm with friendly sympathy, that they will cherish these letters to their latest hours. And on the 18th of January he wrote that delightful letter to Mrs. Smith, now in her husband's works, in which he retracts a previous dissuasive against the publication of his friend's lectures, and urges her, with great cordiality, not to be misled by his first error, but to give them to the world.*

On Tuesday, the 22d, he was in court for the last time. He was then under no apparent illness; insomuch that, before going home, he walked round the Calton Hill, with his usual quickness of step and alertness of gait. But he was taken ill that night of bronchitis and feverish cold; though seemingly not worse than he had often been. On the evening of Friday, the 25th, he dictated a letter to the Lord President, saying that there was no chance of his being in court that week, "nor, I fear, very much even for the next. I shall not write again to you, therefore, till I

* At the period of his discouraging opinion, he had read but a few of the lectures, and these only in manuscript.

can point out some prospect of again appearing in my place. But I do not think it improbable that my next communication to you will be to announce that I have resolved to resign my place on the bench." On the same evening he dictated the last letter he ever wrote to the Empsons. In reference to his old critical habits, parts of it are very curious. It was long, and gave a full and clear description of the whole course of his illness, from which he expected to recover, but had made up his mind not to continue longer on the bench. "I don't think I have had any proper sleep for the last three nights, and I employ portions of them in a way that seems to assume the existence of a sort of dreamy state, lying quite consciously in my bed with my eyes alternately shut and open," enjoying curious visions. He saw "part of a proof-sheet of a new edition of the Apocrypha, and all about Baruch and the Maccabees. I read a good deal in this with much interest," &c., and "a huge Californian newspaper, full of all manner of odd advertisements, some of which amused me much by their novelty. I had then prints of the vulgar old comedies before Shakspeare's time, which were very disgusting." "I could conjure up the spectrum of a close printed political paper filled with discussions on free trade, protection, and colonies, such as one sees in the Times, the Economist, and the Daily News. I read the ideal copies with a good deal of pain and difficulty, owing to the smallness of the type, but with great interest, and, I believe, often for more than an hour at a time; forming a judgment of their merits with great freedom and acuteness, and often saying to myself 'This is very cleverly put, but there is a fallacy in it, for so and so.'"

He died on the evening of the next day, Saturday, the 26th of January, 1850, in his seventy-seventh year.

This event struck the community with peculiar sadness. On the occasion of no death of any illustrious Edinburgh man in our day, was the public sorrow deeper or more

general. As soon as it was known that Jeffrey was gone, the eminence of his talents—the great objects to which they had ever been devoted—his elevation, by gradual triumphs, over many prejudices, to the highest stations—even the abundance of his virtues—were all forgotten, in the personal love of the man.

Some time, apparently in 1849, but the exact date cannot now be ascertained, he wrote a letter to the Empsons, with this passage,—“Edinburgh, Sunday, 7th—I had a long walk with granny (Mrs. Jeffrey) after evening church, a beautiful setting sun, and long rays of levelled light blazing upon tower and tree, and from the high field windows, and the sky, so crimson and yellow, between soft umbered clouds. We went into the Dean Cemetery,* which was resonant with blackbirds, and looked invitingly peaceful and cheerful. I rather think I must have a freehold there, though I have sometimes had a hankering after a *cubiculum* under those sweet weeping willows at Amwell, if one should be called away from the vicinage.”

He expressed the same feeling about the cemetery of the Dean being his resting-place, to his niece Miss Brown within about two months of his death; and even pointed out to her the very spot where he said it gave him pleasure to believe that he would be laid.

He was laid there on the 31st. Several proposals were made for a public funeral; but it was thought better, and certainly more conformable to his character, that it should be quite private.

A meeting of his friends was held on the 7th of February, 1850, to consider the propriety of taking measures for the erection of a public monument to his memory. Lord Dunfermline was called to the chair, and opened the business by a short, feeling, and sensible address. I had the honour of moving certain formal resolutions for putting

* Near Edinburgh, on the road to Craigerook.

matters into shape. These were seconded, in a few observations, by Professor Wilson, who said, "that a monument should be erected to such a man, was a demand from the heart of the nation, and would be gratifying in after ages to every lover of genius and virtue." A committee was appointed to carry the resolutions into effect. William Murray, Esquire, of Henderland, was chosen convener of this committee; a position to which his judgment and his long friendship with the deceased well entitled him, and which secured the object being attained quietly and effectually.

Mrs. Jeffrey never recovered the shock of her husband's death. She died at Haileybury on the 18th of May, and on the 29th her remains were laid beside his.

A majority of those present at a meeting of the committee on the 29th of November, 1850, decided that the monument should be a marble statue, to be placed in the Outer House. The minority (of whom I was one) thought, that as the peculiar merits and services of Francis Jeffrey were of a popular nature, and not connected with the law, and that, as the Outer House, though open to the people, is not habitually frequented by them, an architectural edifice would be more appropriate and useful. Mr. Steell has undertaken the execution of the statue, and every thing may be confidently expected from an artist who, besides having seen the original, has given so many admirable proofs of his skill and taste.

The best likeness of Jeffrey that exists is in the excellent portrait by Mr. Colvin Smith of Edinburgh, from which there has been a good engraving.

And so he passed away.

The preceding pages may enable those who did not know him to imagine what he was and what he did.

He was not so much distinguished by the predominance of any one great quality, as by the union of several of the finest. Rapidity of intellect, instead of misleading, as it often does, was combined in him with great soundness; and a high condition of the reasoning powers with an active and delightful fancy. Though not what is termed learned, his knowledge was various; and on literature, politics, and the philosophy of life, it was deep. A taste exquisitely delicate and largely exercised was one of the great sources of his enjoyment, and of his unmatched critical skill. But the peculiar charm of his character lay in the junction of intellectual power with moral worth. His honour was superior to every temptation by which the world could assail it. The pleasures of the heart were necessary for his existence, and were preferred by him to every other gratification, except the pleasures of conscience. Passing much of his time in literary and political contention, he was never once chilled by an unkind feeling, even toward those he was trying to overcome. An habitual gayety never allowed its thoughtlessness, nor an habitual prudence its caution, to interfere with any claim of charity or duty. Nor was this merely the passive amiableness of a gentle disposition. It was the positive humanity of a resolute man, glowing in the conflicts of the world.

He prepared himself for what he did by judicious early industry. He then chose the most difficult spheres in which talent can be exerted, and excelled in them all; rising from obscurity and dependence to affluence and renown. His splendour as an advocate was exceeded by his eminence as a judge. He was the founder of a new system of criticism, and this a higher one than had ever existed. As an editor, and as a writer, he did as much to improve his country and the world, as can almost ever be done, by discussion, by a single man. He was the last of

four pre-eminent Scotchmen, who, living in their own country, raised its character and extended its reputation, during the period of his career. The other three were Dugald Stewart, Walter Scott, and Thomas Chalmers; each of whom, in literature, philosophy, or policy, caused great changes; and each left upon his age the impression of the mind that produced them. Jeffrey, though surpassed in genius certainly by Scott, and perhaps by Chalmers, was inferior to none of them in public usefulness, or in the beauty of the means by which he achieved it, or in its probable duration. The elevation of the public mind was his peculiar glory. In one respect alone he was unfortunate. The assaults which he led against error were efforts in which the value of his personal services can never be duly seen. His position required him to dissipate, in detached and nameless exertions, as much philosophy and beautiful composition as would have sustained avowed and important original works. He has raised a great monument, but it is one on which his own name is too faintly engraved.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

AFTER the preceding pages had been printed, I received the three following letters, which I think too interesting to be omitted :

The *first*, from Lord Jeffrey, shows that Lord Glenlee's reconciliation to him took place a few years sooner than (page 99) I had supposed.

The *second*, from Lord Byron, shows how entirely his lordship had survived his hatred of the Review and its editor.

The *third*, from Scott to Jeffrey, attests the familiar affection which, in spite of some sharp criticism on the poetry of the writer, had ever subsisted between them.

Lord Jeffrey to Mrs. Jeffrey.

Ayr, 8th April, 1826.

I have a pressing invitation from Lord Glenlee, this morning, to pass a few days with him at Barskimming—the first invitation, or act of common civility, that I have received from him since he chose to quarrel with me about politics, the year I came to the bar. If I can contrive it, I should like to go, both because it is infinitely delightful to me to see old friendships restored, and because I have a curiosity to learn what this new turn portends.

Lord Byron to Jeffrey.

Feb. 28, 1815.

My dear Sir—Mr. Hobhouse will not feel less gratified than I have felt in your approbation and acceptance of his article, which will be faithfully conveyed to him.

Whatever pride I may have felt in your praise of works which I will not affect to undervalue, since they have been sanctioned by your judgment, is, nevertheless, far inferior to the pleasure I should derive from the power of exciting, and the opportunity of cultivating, your personal friendship. My former letter, in 1812, was written under circumstances of embarrassment; for, although you had not allowed my rashness to operate upon your public sentence, I was by no means sure that your private feelings were equally unbiassed. Indeed, I felt that I did not deserve that they should be so, and was, besides, not a little apprehensive of the misconstruction which might be put upon my motives by others, though your own spirit and generosity would acquit me of such to yourself. I shall be now most happy to obtain and preserve whatever portion of your regard you may allot to me. The whole of your conduct to me has already secured mine, with many obligations which would be oppressive, were it not for my esteem of him who has conferred them. I hope we shall meet before a very long time has elapsed; and then, and now, I would willingly endeavour to sustain your good opinion.

I think Waverley can be none but Scott's. There are so many of his familiar phrases—"Balmawhapple was with difficulty *got to horse*;" "any gentleman *curious* in Christian burial;" "poor Rose here *lost heart*;" and a hundred other expressions are so like some of his in letters, that, though slight, I think them sure indications of his touches. Be it whose it may, it is the best novel, to my mind, of many years, and, I cannot help thinking,

will outlive Mrs. Radcliffe and all her ghostly graduates. We have not got "Guy" yet. I should be very happy to try my hand upon some of your humbler patients; but I must take some time and pains, and cannot hope, like Gil Blas, to acquire the whole art at once. Nothing has ever surprised me more than the uniform tone of good writing and original thinking which has been kept up amidst such variety, and even in the drier articles, of the E. R., and I would not adventure myself hastily into so much good company. Our friend Moore does as well as if he had done nothing else all his life; but the fact is, he has powers and versatility of talent for what he will. I have brought myself to the end of my sheet. I know you are very busy, professionally and literarilly, (if there be such a word,) and will only beg you not to throw away your time in answering me till fully and leisurely disposed so far to oblige.—Ever yours most truly. BYRON.

P. S.—"Poetry!"—O Lord!—I have been married these two months.

Sir Walter Scott to Jeffrey.

Abbotsford, 5th August, 1817.

My dear Jeffrey—I flatter myself it will not require many protestations to assure you with what pleasure I would undertake any book that can give you pleasure. But, in the present case, I am hampered by two circumstances; one, that I promised Gifford a review of this very Kirkton for the Quarterly; the other, that I shall certainly be unable to keep my word with him. I am obliged to take exercise three or four hours in the forenoon and two after dinner, to keep off the infernal spasms which, since last winter, have attacked me with such violence as if all the imps that used to plague poor Caliban were washing, wringing, and ironing the unshapely but useful bag which Sir John Sinclair treats with such distinction—my sto-

mach, in short. Now, as I have much to do of my own, I fear I can hardly be of use to you in the present case, which I am very sorry for, as I like the subject, and would be pleased to give my own opinion respecting the Jacobitism of the editor, which, like my own, has a good spice of affectation in it, mingled with some not unnatural feelings of respect for a cause which, though indefensible in common sense and ordinary policy, had a great deal of high-spirited Quixotry about it. Can you not borrow from your briefs and criticism a couple of days to look about you here? I dare not ask Mrs. Jeffrey till next year, when my hand will be out of the mortar-tub; and, at present, my only spare bed was, till of late, but accessible by the feudal accommodation of a drawbridge made of two deals, and still requires the clue of Ariadne. Still, however, there it is, and there is an obliging stage-coach, called the Blucher, which sets down my guests within a mile of my mansion (at Melrose bridge-end) three times a week, and restores them to their families, in like manner, after five hours' travelling. I am like one of Miss Edgeworth's heroines, master of all things in miniature—a little hill and a little glen, and a little horse-pond of a loch, and a little river, I was going to call it—the Tweed; but I remember the minister was mobbed by his parishioners for terming it, in his statistical report, an inconsiderable stream. So pray do come and see me; and if I can stead you, or pleasure you, in the course of the winter, you shall command me. As I bethink me, I can contrive a bachelor bed for Thomson or Jo. Murray, if either of them will come with you; and if you ride, I have plenty of hay and corn, and a bed for your servant.—Ever yours affectionately,

WALTER SCOTT.

Our posts are not very regular, so I was late in receiving yours.

No. II.

LIST OF LORD JEFFREY'S ARTICLES IN THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.

1. Mournier sur la Revolution de France.—No. 1, art. 1.
2. Southey's Thalaba.—No. 1, art. 8.
3. Herrenschwand, *Adresse aux vrais hommes de bien, &c.*
&c.—No. 1, art. 13.
4. Bonnet sur l'Art de rendre Revolutions Utiles.—No. 1, art. 19.
5. Mackenzie's Voyages in North America.—No. 1, art. 22.
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14. Huttonian and Neptunian Geology.—No. 4, art. 5.
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16. De Lille, *Malheur et Pitié, Poëme*.—No. 5, art. 2.
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18. Millar's View of the English Government.—No. 5, art. 13.
19. Stewart's Life of Dr. Reid.—No. 6, art. 1.
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21. Dr. Cririe's Scottish Scenery; a Poem.—No. 6, art. 6.
22. Bentham, *Principes de Legislation par Dumont*.—No. 7, art. 1.

23. Holcroft's Travels from Hamburgh to Paris.—No. 7, art. 6.
24. Hayley's Life of Cowper, vol. III.—No. 8, art. 2.
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26. Considerations on the Abolition of the Slave Trade.—No. 8, art. 17.
27. Richardson's Life and Correspondence.—No. 9, art. 2.
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30. Miss Baillie's Miscellaneous Plays.—No. 10, art. 12.
31. The Sabbath; a Poem.—No. 10, art. 14.
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33. Scott's Lay of the Last Minstrel.—No. 11, art. 1.
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40. The Frauds of the Neutral Flags.—No. 15, art. 1.
41. Cumberland's Memoirs.—No. 15, art. 8.
42. Lessing's Nathan the Wise.—No. 15, art. 11.
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200. Watt or Cavendish?—No. 175, art. 3.

No. III.

LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS TO LORD JEFFREY'S MONUMENT,

And the places where Subscriptions were made.

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